THE TRANSNATIONAL LIVES OF FILIPINO NURSES IN IRELAND IN THE MIDST OF AN EMERGING PHILIPPINES-IRELAND MIGRATION SYSTEM

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The economic boom during the Celtic Tiger era triggered an unprecedented wave of in-migration to Ireland transforming Ireland from an emigrant-sending to an immigrant-receiving state. Filipinos, especially nurses, were among the immigrant groups that responded to the economic opportunities in Ireland. The migration of Filipinos to Ireland, however, is a recent phenomenon. This presented an opportunity to study the factors shaping the beginnings of a migration system, the evolution of migration institutions, ethnic business, and associations in Ireland, and to examine the transnational lives of families of female professional nurses. I examine the reunification process of families, their transnational practices of communication, remittances, and visits, and role reconfigurations in their households division of labor. Using participant and non-participant observation, in-depth individual and couple interviews, and focus groups with nurses and their husbands, in-depth interviews with recruiters, owners of pioneer ethnic Filipino businesses, Filipino association leaders, and other key informants; and reviews of laws, policies, and articles, the study found that among the factors shaping this nascent migration system were: a) the exit policies of the Philippine state, b) the policies of the Irish state regarding (lack of) work entitlements for spouses of migrant workers, EU Accession state national preference, ethical nurse recruitment, English language requirements, citizenship, residency rights

of parents of Irish-born children, and family reunification, and c) the role of the migration industry and networks, specifically the migrant bridgeheads and gatekeepers, reputable international recruitment agencies, and an “escort service,” a human smuggling operation at the Philippines’ gateway airport. The study showed how connections were formed between Irish-based recruiters and Philippine-based recruiters or liaisons, that pioneer ethnic Filipino business owners were often married to Irish nationals or had Irish backers, and that ethnic Filipino associations formed as a result of a spark triggered by a person, event, or organizational split. The study also analyzed the process of and the factors influencing family reunification, the various factors influencing the transnational practices of communication, cash and kind remittances, and visits of migrants, and the role reconfigurations in the household division of labor that occur as a result of migration of the nurse-wife.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Florio Orocio Arguillas, Jr. was born and raised in Davao City, Philippines. He attended elementary school at the Immaculate Conception College in Davao City, and secondary and tertiary school at the Ateneo de Davao University (ADDU). In 1988, he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics at the ADDU. He worked for a year at the Department of Trade and Industry before joining the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) in 1990 until 2000, first as a graduate student, then as a researcher. He earned his Master of Arts degree in Demography at the University of the Philippines in 1995. In 2001, he started graduate school at Cornell University and earned his Master of Science in Development Sociology degree in 2004. He completed his Ph.D. in Development Sociology in 2011.

Dedicated to the current and future generations
of Filipinos and Irish of Filipino descent in Ireland

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABA – An Bord Altranais (Irish Nursing Board)

DFA - Department of Foreign Affairs

DETE – Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment

DOLE – Department of Labor and Employment

EED – European Economic Community

GFC – Galway Filipino Community

KIA – Kaliwat Iliganon Association

MRCI – Migrants Rights Center Ireland

OFW – Overseas Contract Workers

OEC- Overseas Employment Certificate

OFW – Overseas Filipino Workers

OWWA – Overseas Workers Welfare Administration

POEA - Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

PPSN – Personal Public Service Number

RRGOE - Rules and Regulations Governing Overseas Employment

MSH – Marian Sisters' Hospital

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The economic boom in the decade of the 90's, dubbed as the Celtic Tiger era, has transformed Ireland from a net emigration to a net immigration country beginning in 1996. This reversal in migration flow had placed Ireland in a position both as a seasoned emigration country and as a neophyte host country. Ireland's inexperience in hosting immigrants has led to State policies that are evolving and have had a profound influence on the way immigrants and their families live their transnational lives.

Filipinos were among the immigrant groups who responded to the economic opportunities in Ireland. The extensive migration of Filipinos to Ireland is a recent phenomenon. In 1991, there were only 257 officially registered Filipinos in Ireland. Ninety percent of these Filipinos were "romantic immigrants" (Filipinos married to Irish nationals) and domestic workers employed in diplomatic missions. Starting in 1999, this number began to climb with the arrival of Filipino aircraft engine mechanics, mechanical engineers, and sales workers. In the year 2000, Filipino nurses started arriving in Ireland. Data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA henceforth) reveal that 126 Filipino nurses were deployed to Ireland in the year 2000. The following year 1,529 Filipino nurses were added, representing a 1,200 percent growth from the previous year. Filipino nurses have since become the most dominant Filipino occupational group comprising the majority of all Filipinos with work permits and visas in Ireland. From 2000-2006 the POEA data shows that the Philippines deployed a total of 3,512 nurses to Ireland, 82 percent of whom were women. In 2002, a new group of Filipino workers arrived in Ireland. Filipinos working in Malaysia and Singapore as domestics workers were recruited to work as nannies in Ireland (because there is no work permit category for domestic workers).

All in all, from 1999-2006, the Philippines deployed 6,505 workers-- 54 percent were nurses and 7 out of 10 (69.76 percent) were women.

But what factors caused this surge in migration of Filipinos to Ireland? Prior to 1999, the Philippines did not have any significant social, economic, historical or colonial ties with Ireland, which are hypothesized to be the precursors in the development of a migration system (Zlotnik, 1992). It is only recently that these ties have unfolded. Before 1999, diplomatic ties have already existed, but this was mainly to maintain friendly contacts. The closest historical (or cultural) tie between the two countries was the presence of Irish missionaries through the missions of the Redemptorists, Columbans and Dominicans who had missions in the Philippines. These missions dated back to the 1920's, filling the void caused by the departure of the Spanish friars. Even when the definition of colonialism is extended to include the 'cultural dominance' of the Catholic Church (Pareñas, 2000:565; Sarvasy and Longo, 2004:401), "colonialism" still cannot explain the relationship between the two countries because the direction of the flow of people (the missionaries) at that time was largely unidirectional i.e., from Ireland to Philippines, and they were few and far between. The only counter movement of people involved the exchange of missionaries and in some cases missionaries marrying Filipinos and bringing their spouses to Ireland. One of the largest recruiters of Filipino nurses to Ireland illustrates the lack of connection between the two countries, in taking out a map and pointing to Ireland, as the recruiter noted that Filipinos "have no idea where Ireland is."

The recentness of this mass migration of Filipinos to Ireland presents an opportunity to study a new destination and a migration system at its infancy. Tracing and explaining the origins of long-established migration systems has been a challenge that beset migration systems scholars in the past (Balan, 1992). This project provides a unique window to see how this migration system has evolved.

At present there is a growing Filipino community in Ireland. In 2006, Ireland's Census of Population put the figure of Filipinos in Ireland at 9,548, while estimates of the Philippine Consulate in Ireland placed it at 15,000. There are over 10 Filipino communities and organizations in Ireland serving co-nationals both in Ireland and the Philippines through their outreach programs. There are Filipino restaurants, grocery stores and beauty parlors catering to the cultural palate and style of the Filipinos. There are also those that cater to the Filipino soul, including a once-a-month Sunday Catholic Mass in Filipino officiated by the Chaplain of the Filipino people held alternately in four counties, a regular Sunday evangelical church service formed in Ireland by the Filipinos themselves, and regular Sunday service of affiliates of other churches from the Philippines (Jesus is Lord, El Shaddai). There is a bimestrial Filipino magazine, The Filipino Forum, which reports on news and events that concern Filipinos in Ireland, and a cable channel, The Filipino Channel, which transmits Filipino TV shows and news that helps keep Filipinos abreast of the goings-on in their country. There is a Filipino Cultural Committee which organizes the Filipino Day, a day of festivities that showcase the Filipino culture held once a year around the week of June 12, the Philippine Independence Day, now going on its 7th year. There are branches of Philippines state-run insurance (PhilHealth) and loan program (Pag-IBIG), and real estate companies actively promoting real estate investments in the Philippines. Finally, there are freight forwarders and remittance centers that facilitate the migrant workers' remittances to their relatives in the Philippines. This thesis examines how these social and economic structures evolved.

The development of these social and economic structures that connect the Philippines and Ireland, all hint at Filipinos longing for home, a desire to preserve and promote their culture, and to maintain their relationships with relatives and friends in

the Philippines. Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs henceforth), on the one hand, are working and living in Ireland, but at the same time are performing reproductive and social work in the Philippines. They are therefore managing their lives in two settings - a transnational life. This is a narrative that is repeated in other countries where Filipino migrant workers abound. What makes the experience of migrant workers in Ireland stand out is the recentness of all these developments, they all happened within the last ten years, many within the last five, and more importantly, in the early stage of an emerging migration system

The highly feminized nature of migration of Filipinos to Ireland also deserves special investigation. One of the immediate impacts of the departure of a migrant worker, especially if the migrant is a mother, is the rupture of normative roles in the family, especially since families, as socializing agents, transmit cultural values and norms to its members (Boyd, 1989:643). Women traditionally do most of the reproductive work in Filipino households even when actively engaged in the productive sphere. And as the *"ilaw ng tahanan"* (the beacon of the family), they are the guide and inspiration of the rest of the members.

Studies of transnational Filipino families have mostly focused on the experiences of the families of female Filipino domestic workers (Asis, et.al, 2004; Parreñas, 2000; Tacoli, 1999; Zontini, 2004) who have no right to and/or cannot afford to reunite their families in their host country, and whose remittances are insufficient for the maintenance of the families in the Philippines. Frequently they require the assistance of unpaid relative or paid help so that their husbands can continue working and contributing to the household coffers.

To date, transnational family studies have often failed to examine the experiences of female professional workers, such as nurses, who have right and the wherewithal to reunite their families in their host country. Their experiences can

provide additional insights into the processes by which transnational families go through the stages of separation, partial and/or full reunification, and sometimes, de-reunification in the host country.

This dissertation focuses on two primary themes: the emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system and the transnational lives of those who are part of it. In examining the first theme, the thesis will describe the forces at the origin and destination that are shaping the migration system, especially the role played by social networks (endogenous feedbacks) and the state (macro-level contextual feedbacks). It will also discuss the factors that gave rise to the migration industry and the strategies employed to facilitate the migration of Filipino workers to Ireland. Finally, it investigates the evolution of ethnic Filipino businesses and the formation, structure, and function of ethnic Filipino associations that help make transnational life possible.

The thesis examines the transnational lives of married female Filipino migrant nurses who arrived in Ireland before March 2004 and their families, especially the dynamics in transnational families – a) the process of family reunification and the factors affecting the process; b) the gendered role (re)configurations and negotiations in Filipino female nurse households during the process of separation, to partial and/or full reunification; and c) their transnational practices (communication, remittances in cash and goods, and visits) to maintain and sustain their ties in the Philippines during the process of separation, to partial and/or full reunification, and the factors influencing these practices.

Focus is given to this group of nurses for the following reasons: First, I focused on nurses because more than half of the Filipinos working in Ireland are engaged in the nursing profession and many were among the pioneers. Nurses have been present from the very beginning of this system and they and their families had experienced firsthand its dynamism. Second, I focus on married nurses because

family reunification rights in Ireland prior to February 2007 generally apply only to married nurses as they are the only ones with sufficient salaries that can meet the family reunification requirements. Also, the potential for increasing numbers of transnational nurse families in Ireland and elsewhere is significant. Between June 2002 and December 2008, the Philippines produced 215,240 registered nurses (i.e., nursing graduates who passed the board exam), a large percentage of whom have intentions to work abroad. The focus on families of married professional females, such as nurses, provides a different perspective in the study of transnational families, most of which have focused on experiences of women in low skilled occupations (Parreñas, 2005; Zontini, 2004, Asis, et. al., 2004). Third, I focused on female nurses because a great majority of Filipino nurses in Ireland (82 percent) were women. Lastly, I focused on those who arrived before March 2004 because prior to this period the Irish state did not allow spouses of nurses to work, although they were provided rights to join their nurse-spouses. Having experienced the transition from lack of entitlement of spouses to work to being given entitlement to work, their experiences provide insights into the impact of dynamic state policies in the transnational lives of families of migrant professionals specifically on their reunification, transnational practices, and role reconfigurations in the household division of labor.

Study Questions

Specifically, this study will answer the following questions:

1. What were the conditions in the Philippines that led to the emigration of Filipinos to Ireland and that led Ireland to accept immigrants including non-EEA nationals like Filipinos? What roles did the policies of the sending and receiving states play in shaping the direction, composition, growth, and stability of this emerging migration system?

2. How did the migration industry evolve in Ireland? What were their types and the strategies that have been employed to facilitate the migration of Filipino workers to Ireland? In what way did these strategies affect the composition, size, direction of this emerging migration system? How did the processes of migrant selection work within the industry?

3. How did migrant networks, migrant rights advocates, and other migrant support institutions evolve, and what roles did they play in the migration process?

4. How did pioneering ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland evolve? What were the characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs, their strategies to keep their businesses alive, and the roles played by their social networks?

5. Given that family reunification is permitted in Ireland, how do we understand the family reunification process and what factors have most affected the process?

6. With the highly feminized nature of migration of Filipinos to Ireland, in what ways have household roles been reconfigured and how were they negotiated at each stage of the reunification process i.e., during the stages of separation, partial, and full reunification?

7. With family members distributed in at least two countries i.e., Ireland and the Philippines how have transnational families maintained and sustained their ties across borders? What factors have influenced their transnational practices of communication, remittances in cash and goods, and visits in the Philippines during the stages of separation, partial, and full reunification? What roles have Philippine private and state institutions and programs played in encouraging these transnational practices?

8. How have ethnic Filipino associations in Ireland evolved? What were the social, economic, cultural, and political conditions that enabled these associations to form in Ireland? What were their types and how were they maintained and sustained? What was the process of ethnic association formation? Was there an association-triggering person, event, or moment? If yes, who or what was it? What challenges did they face or continue to face as associations? What were the social and development programs of these associations, and the process by which they determine their programs, beneficiaries, and partners in the Philippines?

Organization of the study

In Chapter 2, I review the literature on migration systems, and the theories pertaining to their initiation and perpetuation. I focus specifically on the role of social networks and the social capital that inheres in them; the formation of the migration industry, ethnic entrepreneurs, ethnic associations, and other support infrastructures; and transnational Filipino families, including the practices used to maintain and sustain ties across borders.

In Chapter 3, the methodology chapter, I discuss the use of qualitative methods in the study of migration, followed by the implementation of these methods in this study.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the forces at the origin and destination that initiated the movement of Filipino migrant workers to Ireland – the context of Filipino migration to Ireland in 2000 – including the motivations of Filipino nurses for leaving their previous country of employment and moving to Ireland. This is followed by a discussion on the role of both the Philippines and the Irish states in shaping the direction, composition, and persistence of the migration between the two countries. I

then end the chapter with a discussion on the rise and decline of nurse deployment to Ireland and the trend in Filipino migration to Ireland.

The continuous flow of Filipinos into Ireland would not be possible without the migration industry and social networks. Thus, in Chapter 5, I discuss the evolution and roles of the migration industry and social networks in facilitating the transfer of Filipinos to Ireland.

Having arrived in Ireland, what happened to the nurses and their families? In Chapter 6, I discuss the family reunification process and the factors influencing the reunification of Filipino families in Ireland; the (re)configuration of roles in the division of labor in their household at each stage of the reunification process; and the transnational practices of communication, remittances, and visits of nurses to maintain and sustain their family ties across borders, and the factors influencing these practices.

Transnational life would not be possible without the presence of Filipino infrastructures that cater to the needs of a transnational life. In Chapter 7, I describe the origins of the pioneer ethnic Filipino businesses using the verbal accounts of the owners and/or managers themselves and discuss the external and internal factors that helped in the establishment, growth, and stability of these businesses. I also investigate the process and conditions that allowed for ethnic Filipino associations to form, its types and roles, their social and development programs and the process by which they determine their programs, beneficiaries, and partners in the Philippines. Lastly, I discuss the evolution and roles of other infrastructures that provide support to Filipinos in Ireland.

I make my concluding remarks, policy and methodology recommendations, and suggestions for further research in Chapter 8.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Initiation and Perpetuation of migration systems

Despite numerous studies dealing with migration systems, the genesis of these systems and how they shift from point A (system that is being initiated) to point B (one that is being perpetuated) remains understudied. This chapter reviews the literature on the causes of migration, how migration flows begin and continue, and how current migration patterns create transnational families. The discussion on the initiation and perpetuation theories summarized here follows the classification put forth by Massey, et al. (1993).

A. Theories of migration initiation (or root causes)

Various theories have been put forward to explain the initiation of international migration. These theories put the initiation on the individual (neo-classical microeconomics), the supply and demand for labor (neo-classical macroeconomics), the household (new economics of labor migration), the dual nature of the labor markets of modern industrial countries (dual labor market theory), or dislocations resulting from capitalist penetration (world system's theory) (Massey, et al. 1993).

Neoclassical economics theorists view migration as an investment in human capital i.e., an "investment increasing the productivity of human resources" (Sjaastad, 1962: 83) wherein individuals initially incur costs to develop their skills and then migrate to attain higher returns on their human capital (Lauby and Stark, 1988). According to Borjas (1989), neo-classical economics theorists assume that individuals maximize utility i.e., they search for the country that would best promote their welfare. These theories argue that it is a rational calculating individual who makes the decision

to migrate based on expected rather than actual net benefits of migration. Todaro (1969) modeled this behavior for internal migration when he observed continued rural to urban migration despite high unemployment and underemployment rate in urban areas. He reckoned that levels of unemployment and underemployment surely influence rural workers decision to move. Rather than a one-stage process, he posited that rural to urban migration proceeds in two stages. First, being typically low-skilled, rural migrants would be absorbed in the urban traditional (non-regular) sector, and in time they would attain regular modern sector jobs (1969:139). In his migration-decision model, he argued that the decision of rural workers to migrate was a function of the urban-rural *real* wage differentials and the probability of obtaining an urban sector job. Rural workers had to weigh (i.e., rationally calculate) these two factors when making the decision to migrate to urban areas. His model suggested that rural workers would even consider being unemployed or underemployed in urban areas for a certain period of time for as long as the probability of obtaining a regular higher paying urban sector job fell within their planning horizon. Thus, individuals would migrate even if they did not expect a gain in the short-run for as long as they expect to gain in the long-run or across their planning horizon.

Although Todaro's model is for internal rural-to-urban migration, it is certainly applicable to international migration as well. The neoclassical economists' macro perspective argues that workers move from countries with an oversupply of labor to countries with an undersupply of labor because the latter are expected to pay higher wages than the former. They maintain that individuals decide to move if their cost-benefit calculation results in a positive net return to migration. That migration should stop once the wages at the origin and destination have equalized. Furthermore, the highly skilled are likely to transfer to countries where the returns to their human capital are more substantial (Massey, et al., 1993). Borjas (1989) noted, however,

that migration is constrained by the financial costs of moving, and the immigration policy of the receiving states and emigration policy of the sending states.

The benefits of migration can be monetary in terms of increased earnings or non-monetary in the form of psychic rewards (e.g. attributes of destination such as pleasant climate or amenities). The costs can also be monetary (e.g., travel, information and job search, and communication costs); and psychic (e.g., risks, emotional costs of leaving behind family members, friends, and relatives; or lost opportunities). Psychic costs can partly account for why some workers decide not to move despite the possibility of high earnings in another venue (Sjaastad, 1962). DaVanzo (1976), for example, examined the differences between return and non-return migration using a model that viewed migration as an investment in human capital. She found that non-return and repeat migration were in the direction of higher incomes, but more so for non-return migrants than repeat migrants. In addition, in a study of 246 nurses in two hospitals in Davao City, Philippines Arguillas (2004) found that 85 percent of Filipino nurses who intended to work abroad intended to migrate because of the much higher pay that could be gained abroad, which they would use to help their families financially.

Neo-classical economic theory of migration has been categorized as a "push-pull" theory because it is the combination of the pull factors (e.g., higher wages) from the receiving state and the push factors (e.g., lower wages) from the sending state that initiate migration. This theory has also been criticized for being individualistic in terms of migration decision-making and for being ahistorical (i.e., it neglects historical causes of movements) and downplays the role of the state (Castles and Miller, 1998:20-23).

The new economics of labor migration theorists, however, have argued that the decision to migrate is not often a decision made merely by a rational calculating

individual, but is an outcome of decisions made by families or households to maximize their income and minimize risk. That is, by allocating members to various labor markets, the failure of one will not severely affect the household (Castles and Miller, 1993; Hugo, 1998; Stark and Bloom, 1985). In the Philippines, Lauby and Stark (1988) found that the migration of a family member (or members) to urban areas is a family strategy to cope with unstable agricultural income in rural Philippines, and therefore, is a calculated household strategy for survival.

Whether individual or collective, decisions are influenced by the socio-economic and political context including the pre-existing linkages between the origin and intended destination. Several theories, influenced by Marxist theory, examine migration from a structural perspective. Dual labor market theorists, or in general, segmented labor market theorists contend that it is the pull from modern industrial countries that initiate the migration of workers from less developed countries. Workers do have agency in deciding to migrate, but they often get pulled by the availability of jobs in the primary and secondary labor markets of advanced industrialized societies. Primary labor markets are marked with high paying and secure jobs, low turnover rates, and sizeable returns to human capital (e.g., education and experience). Secondary labor markets are marked with low pay, poor working conditions, unstable employment which adjusts to the ebb and flow of market demand, and low skill requirements (Boyd, 1989; Piore, 1970, 1975).

This bifurcation in the labor market initiates migration in two ways -- the need for highly skilled workers in short supply in the primary sector, and the need for workers to fill low-skilled jobs in the secondary sector. Massey et al., (1993) specified several reasons why this bifurcation in modern industrial societies leads to migration. For example, societal and institutional norms help create hierarchies of occupational prestige and status and heighten demand for foreign workers, as there is little hope that

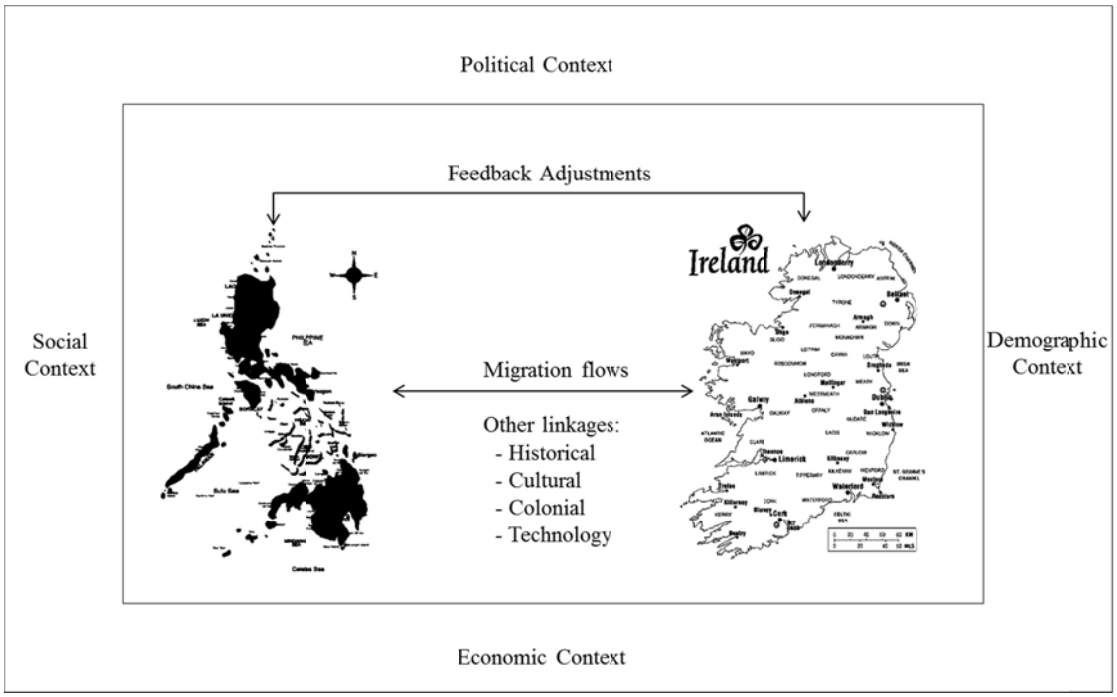
wages at the lower end of the ladder will increase, because that would lead to the inflation of wages in higher occupational status jobs. In addition, modern industrial societies seem unable to motivate local workers to take on low status, low prestige occupations. At the same time, there has been a decline in fertility, which translates to fewer teenagers (who often fill low wage jobs). Finally, increasing opportunity for women mean they are less relegated to low wage employment.

World systems theorists contend that it is not the duality of the labor market, but the countries' level of engagement in the capitalist world-economy that most affects migration. Modern industrialized countries, which act as the core of the capitalist system, redirected the economic development path of peripheral countries (the producers of raw materials) from a uniform evolutionary path (as expressed by Rostow (1960)) to a path of dependency, exacerbated by the uneven development that has been a basic component of capitalism (Wallerstein, 1974; Chirot and Hall, 1982). Capitalist penetration has destroyed pre-existing "mini-systems" and displaced workers, as peripheral countries specialized in producing raw materials where they have a comparative advantage.

B. Theories of migration perpetuation (or internal dynamics)

A migration system may develop when migration becomes self-sustaining and perpetuates. Figure 2.1 shows a diagram of the migration systems approach to international migration. Migration systems are usually composed of at least two countries with significant levels of flows and counter-flows of people. Information, capital, and goods are also exchanged in conjunction with human exchange (Fawcett, 1989). Zlotnik (1992) added that a certain threshold level of exchange of people is required, although the level has never been specified. These linkages and exchanges occur with changing national social, economic, political, and demographic context

"partly in response to the feedbacks and adjustments that stem from the migration flow itself" (Kritz and Zlotnik, 1992:3; Jennissen, 2007). These systems usually arise from prior economic or trade, cultural, historical, or colonial ties. The Mexico-US migration system is an example of a migration system developed through economic ties, while the Philippines-US migration system is an example of a migration system developed through past colonial ties.



Source: Kritz and Zlotnik (1992).

Figure 2.1 Migration Systems Framework of international Migration[1]

Migration systems have two dimensions – space and time. Its space dimension involves the countries that exchanged people, and its time dimension involves the development and/or changes in the linkages and/or context. Because of its time and

[1] Kritz and Zlotnik (1992) provided a general framework of international migration systems. In the original framework, what is now the photo of the Philippines was Country A and what is now the photo of Ireland was Country B.

space dimension, a migration system perspective is able to explain patterns of migration alongside changing social, economic, political, technological, and demographic context. According to Castles and Miller (1998:24-25) this perspective implies that migration is a result of the interaction of macro- and micro-structures. The macro-structures include the origin and host states' policies and laws regarding entry and exit of people, while the micro-structures refer to migrant social networks and their social capital, and their role in starting, sustaining, and shaping migration flows.

Of importance to the study of migration systems is the examination of the processes that link the origin and destination countries. Fawcett (1989) elaborated on the linkages that exist in migration systems and distinguished people linkages (flow and counter-flow of people) with non-people linkages, focusing on the latter's importance. Non-people linkages are important in establishing, maintaining, and shaping migration systems because they may influence, entice, or convince people to migrate. Thus, migration usually evolves from these linkages. Fawcett provided a framework of the various linkages in migration systems which he grouped into four categories: a) *state-to-state relations* such as material and trade flows, immigration and emigration policies, economic or political dependency relations; b) *mass culture connections* such as media that transmit information about destination areas, the extent of the culture of migration at the place of origin and reception at the place of destination, "degree of similarity between cultures, compatibility of value systems, and commonalities in language and educational systems" (p. 677); c) *family and personal networks* such as the transnational practices of remittances, communication, and visits, which not only maintain relationships with the origin, but expose potential migrants to some aspects of life at the destination; obligations to family and friends which could result in chain migration, and the relative deprivation that may ensue with

the usually improved economic status of migrant's vis-à-vis non-migrant's families; and d) *migrant agency activities*, such as their recruitment paraphernalia and strategies including benefits offered to entice prospective migrants, the job requirements (e.g., a nurse with at least 2 years of experience) and employment contracts (which have an effect on the size and composition of the migration flow), and how actual conditions at destination are leveraged by agencies to entice others to migrate. How these linkages were established and how they interacted with other linkages is crucial to understanding the birth and history of migration systems.

Since first articulated by Mabogunje in 1970, the systems approach in explaining enduring migration flows and counter-flows has roused the interests of many scholars. Numerous migration systems have since been identified, including linkages between countries all over the world (e.g., North America, the South Pacific, West Africa, Caribbean, Southern Cone of Latin America, and Europe among others) (Balan, 1992; Bedford, 1992; Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1992; Simmons and Guengant, 1992; Zlotnik, 1992).

Three main theories have been brought forward that help explain the perpetuation of migration leading to the development of migration systems – institutional, cumulative causation, and network theories (Massey et al., 1993). Although the factors that initiate migration may still contribute to the migration flows, the above-mentioned theories explain how migration perpetuates even after the original cause has waned.

Institutional theorists purport that once migration is underway, a migration industry (Castles and Miller, 1993) or set of institutions (legal or not) develop to facilitate and profit from the migration. Voluntary organizations also arise to provide assistance to abused, exploited migrants, and to act as advocate for migrant rights. These institutions are often embedded within migrant networks (Jennissen, 2003:175).

Examples of these institutions are recruitment agencies, smuggling syndicates, immigration lawyers, visa traffickers, and migrant rights organizations. The establishment of these institutions makes it difficult for the state to stop the flow of people because from the migration industry point-of-view it is a lucrative business and they will do everything to protect their interests. From the voluntary organizations perspective, these migrants have human rights and must be protected by the state (Massey, et. al 1993). The Church is often instrumental in the establishment of these migrant rights advocacy groups. In Barcelona, nuns created the *Centro Filipino*, an organization that provides assistance to Filipino migrants in learning Spanish, teaching Filipino culture to Filipino children, and giving advice to newly-arrived co-nationals. This organization also collaborates with other European Filipino associations to advance the needs of Filipino domestic workers all over Europe (Zontini, 2004:1130).

The theory of cumulative causation involves factors that are affected by migration, which in turn cause additional migration. This cyclical pattern works in cumulative fashion and develops its own momentum, thereby perpetuating migration, and even becoming immune to policy intervention (Garson, 1992). Massey et al (1993:451) note "that each act of migration alters the social context within which subsequent migration decisions are made, typically in ways that make additional movement more likely." The authors identified six factors that affected migration in a cumulative fashion: a) the distribution of income through relative deprivation which encourages the deprived to migrate; b) the distribution of land which is likely to be unproductive under the migrant's care because of their absence leading to displacement of local workers; c) the organization of agrarian production i.e., whenever land is made productive by the migrant, it would likely be utilizing labor-saving technologies rather than local workers, thereby displacing workers; d) the culture of migration i.e., migration brings with it lifestyle changes in sending areas

which are difficult to maintain with local wages, thereby encouraging migration. In addition, over time, as more and more people migrate, this becomes ingrained in the attitudes and behavior of local people as an acceptable behavior, even at the expense of family unity. As Simmons and Guengant (1992:110) had noted, over time migrants no longer feel guilt or family resistance; on the contrary, they were encouraged to go abroad; e) social labeling has led some jobs in host societies to be labeled as immigrant jobs and these have become unattractive to locals, thereby requiring more migrant workers to fill the job. Finally, the sixth condition, involves the regional distribution of human capital, where sustained migration depletes the human capital in sending areas and boosts that of the receiving area. As the latter grows, the former stagnates, thereby pushing people to migrate.

Faist (2000:52) noted that migrant networks connect the three main elements of migration systems – the emigration flow to and immigrant stock in the host country, and return flow from the host back to the origin country. Migrant networks are "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin" (Massey, et al. 1993:448). These ties can be social or symbolic. *Social ties* are "a continuing series of interpersonal transactions to which participants attach shared interests, obligations, expectations, and norms" (Faist, 2000:101). Examples of these are family and kinship ties, club and association membership). *Symbolic ties* are "perceived bonds, both face-to-face and indirect, to which participants attach shared meanings, memories, future expectations, and representations" (Faist, 2000:102). They encompass kinship ties and extend outwards towards those practicing the same religion, having the same language, ethnicity, or nationality. Embedded in these social and symbolic ties are *social capital* which facilitates action and cooperation in, and links individuals to, networks and organizations. Social capital includes both: a) local

assets that are not easily transferrable internationally without migrant networks because it inheres in the relationship of a group of individuals and not in the individual unlike human capital; and b) *transmission belts,* a resource that members can draw upon to fulfill their individual or group goals because it can mobilize other forms of capital such as economic, human, and cultural capital (Pries, 1999:41-42). The resources themselves are not the social capital, rather it's in the ability to mobilize them on demand. Since it inheres in the relations of the group, it is the property of the group, but sometimes has externalities that affect those outside the group.

Gurak and Caces (1992:167-168) found that networks have different functions depending on their location i.e., whether they are at the origin, destination, or in both areas. At destination, networks help in the adaptation process by providing assistance in housing and employment; reduce the economic costs and psychic costs of adjustments; help in the integration process, especially when an ethnic community evolves; and help preserve the norms of the origin society and constrain migrants to act in ways that would bring benefit to the origin society. At both origin and destination, networks help in the recruitment process by providing valuable information about the destination that is useful in the decision-making of a potential migrant, in some cases financing the costs of migration including transportation and initial accommodation, and also connecting migrants to formal recruitment agencies. They serve as channels for regular contact between individuals at both origin and host society through regular communication, exchange of resources, and short-term visits or return migration (Gurak and Caces, 1992:167). Migrant networks have been found to increase the odds of first and repeat migration (Massey and Aysa, 2005) and undocumented migration (Flores, 2005), all of which are suggestive of the self-feeding dynamics in migrant networks. At origin, local networks constitute the support networks of those left behind by the migrants. They are also one means by which

remittances are sent to supplement the income at the origin society (Gurak and Caces, 1992:168).

Networks are dynamic and can shift over time. Some members of the network become involved in the migration industry as a recruitment agent, travel agent, or human smuggler. As migration continues, networks coalesce and form associations or ethnic communities. Structurally, ethnic communities are networks of networks or organizations (Faist, 1999). Castles and Miller (1998:26) noted that "migrant groups develop their own social and economic infrastructures: places of worship, associations, shops, cafes, professionals like lawyers and doctors, and other services." They added that the development of these infrastructures is usually tied to the growth in immigrant population as a result of family reunification.

Networks are crucial in migration because they provide the potential resources and information required to come up with an informed decision to follow relatives who went before them, lower the costs and risks of migration, and even help in the determination of wages. Basok's (2000) study of the migration of Mexican seasonal farm workers in Canada showed that social networks, especially kinship networks, helped determine the participants in the Canadian program for seasonal farm workers. She observed that most participants in the program were concentrated in certain municipalities (7 out of 46 in one state), and in certain communities within those municipalities, and many have the same paternal and/or maternal names. Aguilera and Massey (2003) found that the possession and use of familial and friendship networks in a job search have positive and significant direct effects on the earnings of Mexican migrants in the U.S., although these do differ between documented and undocumented migrants. For documented migrants, *near family ties* (which they defined as close family members composed of parents, siblings, spouses and children) with past or current migration experience, play a more important role in determining

their U.S wages than their *far family ties* (e.g. uncle, aunts, cousins, nieces), *friendship ties*, or their interaction with U.S citizens and participation in U.S. institutions (social organizations). For undocumented migrants, however, it is far family ties, friendship ties, interaction with US citizens, and involvement in U.S. social organizations that play the more important role in determining their wages in the U.S.

The functioning of networks, however, can be constrained by the costs and distance of moving (Gurak and Caces, 1992) and by state policies (Collyer, 2005). For example, Collyer (2005) observed that post-entry migration restrictions can immobilize migrant networks. He examined the reasons why some Algerian asylum-seekers chose the UK over France as their destination when many of them have relatives in France. With the global-war on terror, the French government has treated Algerian immigration as a security issue and has stepped up the implementation of its immigration policy. The State has denied provision of health care and social support to undocumented immigrants. This has made undocumented immigrants completely dependent on their social networks for longer periods of time, as their relatives have become their primary source of insurance. While their relatives were willing to support them initially, they could only support them up to a certain point. Many left France for another country so as not to be a continuing burden to their relatives. Others returned to France without informing their relatives. As the price of supporting new migrants increased, their relatives became reluctant to sponsor the travels of other relatives to Algeria. Many undocumented migrants have been forced to search for assistance elsewhere i.e., from their weak ties (such as smugglers) because many strong ties can no longer be relied upon.

Clearly, not all networks lead to the migration of others. The mere presence of a migrant at destination with whom the origin community has ties does not guarantee that the migrant will provide assistance. Applying diffusion theory to the study of

migrant networks, De Haas (2009) equated pioneer migrants as innovators or adopters as opposed to the early majority, late majority, and laggard adopters of innovation. As the "innovation" (migration experience) becomes diffused and networks develop, the costs and risks of migration decline, enabling more people to migrate. Not all people are able to migrate, however, and the diffusion does not reach everyone because of issues relating to structure and power within communities. De Haas (2009:18) pointed out that "migration tends to be a socially stratified process, in which particular families, ethnic groups or classes participate in specific forms of migration." He has argued that while for the most part social capital facilitates migration, there is also a migration-undermining social capital – negative social capital that Portes identified that can lead to the demise, decline, or stagnation of migration systems, these are: a) exclusion of non-network members – strong ties within the group can exclude others outside the group; b) excessive claims on group members – because of the norms of reciprocity that inhere in networks other members might make excessive claims to the consternation of others; c) restrictions in individual freedom – demands on the members for conformity might restrict individual freedoms; and d) downward leveling norms -- where the upward mobility of some members is blocked to preserve the status quo as it could threaten group cohesion (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993).

The exclusionary negative effect of social capital was echoed by Putnam (2000) in his discussion on the bonding and bridging dimensions of social capital. Bonding social capital brings together people of a similar sort (e.g., Cornell Filipino Association) while bridging social capital brings together people of different sorts (e.g., Civil Rights Movement). Bonding social capital tends to be exclusive to members only while bridging social capital is inclusive of others. Bridging social capital is consonant with Granoveter's strength of weak ties thesis. Some externalities of bonding social capital are negative because it tends to create strong in-

group loyalty which can lead to its worst manifestations – ethnocentrism and sectarianism. The externalities of bridging social capital, however, are mostly positive.

De Haas (2009) added that not all social networks lead to more migration, while there are bridgeheads, there are also gatekeepers. This pinpointed an inherent weakness of network analysis -- it focuses only on ties and positions of people in the network, and the regularities or patterns of interactions that give rise to social structures (Faist 2000:15). It does not explain how networks form and the process of migrant selection, specifically the disproportionate access of potential migrants to their migrant networks. It cannot answer why many others don't migrate when networks are available. Network theory could not answer the question raised by Faist (2000) -- Why so many migrants from so few countries? Why so few migrants from most countries? The answer lies in the contents of the ties within social (network) structures -- social capital.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986:248) defined social capital as the "aggregate of actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word." He added that social capital is "a product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously, to establish or reproduce social relationships that are usable in the short or long term" (p. 249) and takes time to develop as it requires a continuous series of exchanges among the members for it to grow. Putnam (2000) encouraged the frequent interaction (or exchanges) of members of the social networks because it produces a norm of generalized reciprocity which entails mutual obligations (where one does a favor for

someone in the expectation that the other will help him in his time of need) that makes for an efficient society since every favor does not have to be repaid immediately.

Portes (1995, 1998) noted that the growing consensus from the literature is that social capital stands for "the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (1998:6). These benefits or resources can be tangible (discounts, loans) or intangible (information, tips, goodwill). Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes returns on investments as material (e.g., services) and/or symbolic profits (e.g., being part of a prestigious group). However, Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) emphasized that the resources, benefits, or return on investments are ***not*** social capital. Social capital refers to the individual's ***ability to mobilize*** the resources on demand (Portes, 1995:12).

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) identified four sources[2] of social capital where expectations for action, which are resources that are appropriable to the members of the collective, reside. *Value introjections* are values learned through the process of socialization. Through socialization an individual unconsciously incorporates into his own psyche behaviors from the members of the collectivity. This process creates expectation from members to behave in certain ways which is appropriable as a resource by the other members of the collectivity. *Bounded solidarity* emerges from special circumstances that lead to principled group behavior. Donor grants resources out of solidarity with a particular individual or group. The altruistic disposition of some members of this group can be appropriated by the other members as their source of social capital. *Reciprocity transactions* arise from interactions among the members of the collectivity as they go about their daily lives. As they interact they accumulate obligations or "chits" from others which they can exchange later for favors when the need arises. This is different from economic

[2] Portes and Sensenbrenner use the terms "sources" and "types" of social capital interchangeably.

exchange because the form of payment maybe different from the form in which it was incurred. In addition, the timing of repayment is not specified. In *enforceable trust* the power of the community plays a critical role. Repayment of obligations is enforceable by the community either by serving as a guarantor or providing status, honor or approval to the donor. Defaulting from the obligations carries tremendous risks because of the sanctioning capability of the community. What drives individuals to donate resources in the first two forms of social capital mentioned above is altruism[3], while in the other two is instrumental.

Internal dynamics during the beginning stages of migration systems

As migration proceeds from initiation to a full-blown migration system, institutions develop along the way. These institutions that are crucial to the development and perpetuation of migrations systems are migrant networks, the migration industry, ethnic businesses, and ethnic associations. In the sections that follow I review the literature on how these institutions have evolved or been studied, using as discussion guide the general trend of their emergence as I observed them in the emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system (Figure 2.2).

States play crucial roles in the initiation of migration systems by jumpstarting and facilitating the process of labor migration either through sanctioned mass recruitment of labor or through bilateral agreements. Examples of these recruitments are: a) the United States-Mexican Bracero Accord (Boyd, 1989); b) the official recruitment efforts of Germany in 1960 to satisfy their need for workers which triggered labor migration from Turkey that eventually led to the development of the Turkish-German migration system (Wilpert, 1992); and c) the bilateral agreement

[3] Portes used various terms for the motivations of donors in value introjections and bounded solidarity. With Sensenbrenner in 1993, they called it principled motivation. In 1995, he called it altruistic, and consummatory in 1998.

signed by the Council of Vienna and the Labor ministry of the Philippines in 1973 to help address their nursing shortage, that led to the migration of hundreds of Filipino nurses in Vienna, Austria which then paved the way for other Filipinos to access Vienna's labor market (Hintermann and Rigger, 2005).

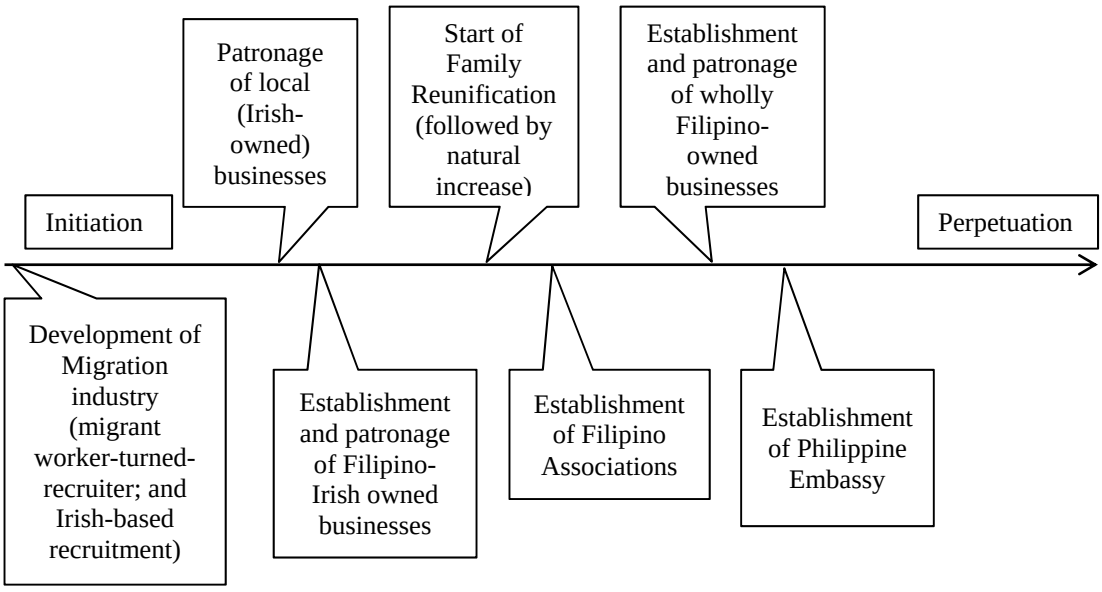


Figure 2.2 Trend of emergence of institutions in the Philippines-Ireland migration system

Migrant networks and the migration industry

The first workers to respond to the need of the receiving state become bridgeheads and pioneers. In long-established migration systems it is very difficult to track the first migrant who left their origin community to try their fortunes in a new country (Kritz and Zlotnik, 1992), but in rare occasions they can be traced. In the case of Turkish-Germany migration one village could trace its involvement in the migration system to the village shepherd who applied and was selected to work in Germany. Upon his return he encouraged his brothers to join him, and their success encouraged others to do the same (Wilpert, 1992). In the case of labor migration within Thailand,

migrants can be traced all the way back to 1929 to a policeman who was sent to Bangkok. The news he provided about the destination encouraged others to migrate (Singhanetra-Renard, 1992). In many cases identifying in the community the pioneering *individual* who migrated is not possible because many departed simultaneously or simply because of a lack of records as in the case of migration systems that were developed through past colonial ties. However, identifying pioneering *groups* of migrants who were instrumental in the migration process is less difficult to do. Filipino nurses in Vienna in 1973 are an example of those who arrived in groups as pioneers. Because of them other Filipinos followed and by the turn of the 20th century about 4,100 had been naturalized (Hintermann and Rigger (2005). The "Aramco boys", a group of oil refinery construction workers from San Rafael, Southern Luzon, Philippines pioneered working at the Arab American Oil Company in Saudi Arabia (hence the name). These migrants paved the way for men in their community to work in the Gulf region (Asis, 1995).

Soon after the states in short supply of labor announced the opening of their labor markets for workers, recruitment agencies or migration industry, usually officially sanctioned by the government, sprang into action to facilitate the transfer of workers (Boyd 1989; Castles and Miller, 1998). These transfers of people are usually facilitated by legitimate recruitment agencies or head hunters. In others, however, they are facilitated by networks involved in illegal migration (Wilpert, 1992) e.g., through false documentation, paper marriages, clandestine migration (Singhanetra-Renard, 1992), or encouraged by networks to arrive as tourists then violate their conditions of stay (Asis, 1995). Migration institutions often keep the flow of people going because they have strong economic interest in ensuring its continuation (Castles and Miller, 1998). Industry members likely are among those who will challenge any attempts by governments to control or stop the movement of people. More needs to be

understood, however, about who the recruitment brokers are, and how they got started in the business. What was the social, economic, political, and cultural context when they became brokers and how did these contexts affect the strategies that they employed to recruit workers?

The rise of ethnic entrepreneurs

Migrant networks cannot perform their functions or become mobilized if neither side is able to perform trans-boundary exchanges such as communication, remittance-sending, or take on short-term return trips. During the initial stages of migration, it is the local entrepreneurs at the host country that cater to the needs of the migrants. However, as the flow of migrants continue, ethnic businesses emerge to cater to their needs for ethnic goods and services, and to facilitate their transnational practices of communication, transfer of money or goods, and occasional visits back to their hometown.

These ethnic entrepreneurs are vital in the growth of migration systems as their services/activities not only enable the preservation of culture, but help establish and regularize social and economic linkages between or among the countries involved in the migration systems. Social networks, number of ethnic population, and host country business policies play an important role in the establishment and nature of ethnic businesses. In his study of the Cuban ethnic economy in Miami, Portes (1987:346) found that the strength and composition of ethnic institutions, such as the church, ethnic chambers of commerce, rotating credit association and the help and resources that they provide to potential or existing entrepreneurs are vital because "successful business creation requires access to start-up capital, markets, and relevant information. Ethnic institutions create and promote social networks through which these and other necessary resources can be obtained." In Paris, Fresnoza-Flot and

Pecoud (2007) found that Filipino entrepreneurships were facilitated by social networks, which include family, friends (mostly co-ethnics, but also include other nationalities), and institutions such as the Catholic Church. The emergence and type of Filipino entrepreneurship were attributed to the rise in the number of Filipinos and the host country's policy on business activities which made feasible the establishment of businesses that would cater to the tastes and preferences of the "protected market" (p. 9). In Paris, most Filipino entrepreneurs run businesses that are not regulated by the state (including catering, retail and whole sale of dry goods). In the Netherlands, Maas (2004) found that most Filipino enterprises were service-oriented rather than production oriented and found a difference between the business orientation of male and female entrepreneurs. Females have a transnational business orientation, which she defines as a type of business that "imports or exports products from or to the Philippines, brings over goods or people from or to the Philippines, or is foremost directed towards the Filipino community in Netherlands" (p. 5), while men's business orientation were directed towards the local Dutch market.

As migration continues to flow, ethnic enclaves, middlemen groups and occupational niches are formed. Portes (1995) noted that the emergence and success of ethnic enclaves, middlemen groups, and occupational niches in the destination societies depended on the social capital that inheres in the networks. For middlemen groups, ethnic networks provide valuable tips about business opportunities in the ethnic community. Ethnic networks are also sources of information about job openings in occupational niches and are sources of business start-up capital at the enclaves.

The above cited studies provided a roadmap into the investigation of the rise of ethnic entrepreneurs, but these were not of pioneer ethnic business entrepreneurs. What is understudied is how pioneering ethnic immigrant businesses evolved. When,

how, and in what context did these pioneering ethnic businesses evolved? What were the characteristics of these migrant entrepreneurs and their strategies to keep their business alive, and the roles played by their social networks?

The rise of ethnic associations

Soon after the arrival of the pioneers, they call on their relatives and friends to follow and set off a chain migration. The process is hastened with the establishment of the migration industries and other ethnic support infrastructures such as the ethnic business entrepreneurs. Chain migration has channeling effects which lead to residential concentrations of population coming from one origin community (Owusu, 2000; Basok, 2005). Family reunification is one form of chain migration responsible for increasing the residential density of a host community.

The influx of migrants, their residential concentration, and the state's openness to immigrants all affect the formation of ethnic associations. Policies of multiculturalism, which include programs against racism, promotion of interculturalism, cultural diversity, and policies on permanent settlement and naturalization are contributory factors to the formation of ethnic associations and communities in general (Owusu, 2000; Castles and Milller, 1998:29). Their formation is important in migration systems because they contribute to the institutionalization of ties between the host and receiving country (Orozco, 2000).

The key purpose of ethnic associations is to unite co-ethnics or co-nationals. These associations have social, economic, cultural, and political function. Social functions include organizing parties, meetings, picnics, and other recreational activities for the members. Their economic function includes providing soft loans to cash-strapped members in the host country and contributing to the social and economic development of their hometown or region in the origin country (Orozco,

2000; Owusu, 2000). Examples of these "international" activities of the ethnic associations were categorized by Orozco (2000:8) as charitable donations (clothes, toys), improving town infrastructures (parks, fire trucks, and ambulances), "human development" activities (scholarships), capital investment for income generation projects, and others (general fund raising). Their cultural function include the promotion, preservation and expression of culture through cultural education programs such as teaching the youth their language, customs and norms; and providing assistance in funeral and burial rituals and costs (Owusu, 2000). As an example of a political function, the Ghanaian ethnic associations in Canada campaigned for the acquisition of dual citizenship in their homeland because in 1992 the Ghana constitution was revised and it included a provision denying Ghanaian citizenship to those who have acquired foreign citizenship (Owusu, 2000).

The programs of these ethnic associations are determined by the members themselves or contacts from their hometown. Orozco (2000) in his study of hometown associations (HTAs) from four Latin American countries found a priest, local elites, and a local foundation established by the HTAs in the community themselves among those who informed them of the community needs. He also found that some of the HTAs partnered with the government in investment and some local development projects. In one case the local government tried to control the project, but failed.

Studies of ethnic associations have examined the function and activities (local and international) of ethnic associations, but there is a dearth of information, however, on how these ethnic associations came about. What was the process of ethnic association formation? Was there an association-triggering person, event, or moment? If yes, who or what was it? Ethnic associations and hometown associations have development programs mostly directed at their origin community, but what motivated

them to help? How did the process of identifying the beneficiaries unfold? And finally, do beneficiaries differ if the association is a hometown/ethnic association or a host-town association?

Transnational Families

Within migration systems transnational social spaces such as families, households, ethnic businesses, advocacy networks, communities, and organizations emerge (Faist and Özveren, 2004:7; Lima, 2001:77). Transnational social spaces are "combinations of social and symbolic ties, positions in networks and organizations and networks of organizations that can be found in at least two geographically and internationally distinct places" (Pries, 1999:40). As a basic unit in society, the transnational family is the critical social institution that ensures the continuity of transnational social spaces (Lima et al., 2001). The transnational communities they form and connect have been found to exhibit characteristics of both the current and former regions (Nina Glick Schiller et al. in Pries, 1999:26). The development of these transnational social spaces has largely been due to the compression of space and time resulting from the advancements in telecommunications and transportation technology.

In the past, when the level of transportation and communications technology was poor, migration was largely unidirectional and one-time (Pries, 1999). The possibility of ever returning was very slim. For example, in the case of families of Irish emigrants, they oftentimes would hold an "American wake" to mourn family members who departed for the U.S. because they were unlikely to return, or ever to be seen again (Gerald, 1999). However, with advancement in communications and transportation technology, migrants are now able to travel more easily, returning home permanently or for a short visit with relative frequency. This compression of space

and time has allowed migrants, groups, communities, and non-state organizations to build or maintain ties across borders. Migrants can now work and live in one country, and at the same time perform reproductive and social work in another i.e., they have a transnational life. According to Smith (2001:37) transnational life "includes those practices and relationships linking immigrants and their descendants abroad with the home country, where such practices have significant meaning, and [are] regularly carried out, and embody important aspects of identity and social structure that help form the life world of immigrants or their descendants."

What are the transnational practices that migrants use to maintain and sustain their ties with their origin country? The practices can be categorized into four types – communications, remittances, visits, and reproductive work. Parreñas (2000:561) defined reproductive work as "the labor needed to sustain the productive labor force. Such works include household chores; the care of elders, adults and youth; the socialization of children and the maintenance of social ties in the family." Reproductive work has also been dubbed as "care work" needed to maintain and sustain human beings throughout their life cycle (Truong, 1996: 32 in Asis, et al (2004:199)). Reynolds and Zontini (2006) broke down care work into two forms of family care: *caring about* and *caring for*. The *caring about* form of family care "encompasses contact and emotional support and refers to emotional function connected with sociability, advice comfort, and self-validation. Examples of caring about activities include communication by telephone, letters, e-mails, visits, participation in family decision-making and financing the purchase of care," (p. 5) while *caring for* refers to "concrete, 'hands-on' care-giving on a personal level" (p. 5). Thus, it is expected that *caring for* form of family care would dominate amongst migrants prior to migration and during return migration to the origin community, while *caring about* form of family care would dominate in the host country.

Zontini (2004) found that transnational Filipino families in Barcelona, Spain were formed because Filipino women, mostly working as domestic workers, migrated alone. Often they migrated with the intention to stay only temporarily, but ended up staying longer because the investments or debts incurred to finance the migration have not been paid, and/or due to changes in family circumstances (e.g., death or illness of family member) that necessitated a longer stay to contribute more to the family financially. Once settled, they oftentimes have become part of the network that will bring additional relatives abroad, which they employ as a strategy to share the burden of supporting family members in the Philippines. Some became "transnational mothers" because they were forced to stay longer in Barcelona because of the costs of maintaining a household in the Philippines, especially to cover the costs of educating their children, but also because of the overall difficult economic condition in the Philippines (p. 1120). For some, transnational life can become long-term because they get married overseas or because of changes in family circumstances as mentioned above. Because of their income in Barcelona, they often become the main breadwinner of the family. They send remittances regularly to near, and even, far relatives. Many support their elderly parents because of the inadequate welfare system for those who have not had a regular job in the public and private sector. Their remittances are often used for investments in property and to help finance the migration of other relatives. Some have bought houses in Barcelona as an investment and inheritance for their Barcelona-resident children.

Filipinos in Barcelona maintain ties with their families through cash and kind remittances, letters and phone calls, and visits which they do on average every five years. Because of the rarity of return trips to the Philippines, their transnational life manifests itself in communication and regular remittances. However, migrants still call the Philippines home and continue to maintain ties with relatives in the

Philippines and in other parts of the world. They often maintain the latter for the purpose of finding jobs with better working conditions in the future.

Being away from the Philippines, *caring for* forms of family care is impossible. Instead, other members of the family take on the reproductive work they left behind. In many cases they hire a domestic worker in the Philippines to take care of their children while they work as domestic workers in Barcelona taking care of their employers' children, which is a process called the global care chain (Hochschild, 2000). For some of those who have had children in Barcelona, they import their parents so they can mind their grandchildren while they work during the day. Others delay marriage so they can continue to provide for their parents in the Philippines. As main breadwinners, they have renegotiated their roles in the family. They can continue with their job without having to worry about care work, as other members step up to cover for them.

Migrants typically gain more control and independence as a result of their migration (Zontini, 2004: 1133). Leaving the Philippines is a way to escape abusive relationships. Prolonged migration can also result in marriage dissolution for some, and it can weaken the bonds with family members for others. Those who are apart from their children often commodify their relationships by spoiling children with money or material things to compensate for their absence (p. 1134). Those who have children in Barcelona find it difficult to raise them because of higher costs of living and different forms of sacrifices (like bringing children to work); or they have to utilize the services of a kindergarten, relatives, or baby sitters.

In her study of young adult children who have experienced transnational family arrangements for at least five years, Parreñas (2005) found that in migrant mothers' households, mothers typically become the main breadwinner of the household. But despite being away and having acquired new economic power, they

still perpetuate conventional gender norms, and therefore, a non-egalitarian household division of labor. Parreñas noted that fathers still do not do much of the caring work in the household. Instead, they relegate caring tasks to other women. For those who can afford them (middle class), men would entrust caring tasks to domestic workers. For those who cannot afford maids, eldest daughters or (usually female) extended kin often do the caring tasks. Transnational mothers still do nurturing work despite living in a distant land. They do it through regular (sometimes daily) substantive communication via phone calls (or text messages) on topics such as their health and educational well-being. Men, on the other hand, are often emotionally absent, despite co-residing with children or living nearby. She also found that, with the absence of the mother, eldest daughters often do more housework than their fathers and their older brothers, and are often charged with taking care of younger siblings. The extended relatives who may also take care of migrant's children are often the aunts or grandmothers of the children. Some see the additional responsibilities as a burden, but feel they have no choice because of cultural expectations of familial cooperation (p. 263). The findings from the above studies should be placed in the context of the power dynamics between husband and wives in Filipino nuclear households. In these households, men generally have more power over household decisions than women (Medina, 1991; Williams and Domingo, 1993).

Maintaining Ties: Transnational practices of communication, remittances, and visits

Transnational practices of communication, remittances, visits, and reproductive work are vital to the maintenance of ties across borders. Wilpert (1992) stated that sustained contacts with relatives and friends at the origin area encourage more migration to take place. The most common form of transnational practice is communication. According to Vertovec (2004:220), communication serves as a

"social glue connecting small-scale social formations across the globe." Vertovec found that technological advancements and availability of cheap modes of communication enable frequent communication. He found increased use of cheap international phone calls by migrants which he inferred from the growth in telephone traffic in specific migrant-sending and migrant-receiving countries. The availability of cheap phone calls allow for greater frequency and regularity of communication. He noted, for example, that calls from the U.S.A to the Philippines from 1995 to 2001 grew by 452 percent. In this period, global telephoning doubled. He added that increased development and spread of telephone cards was a contributory factor in this expansion, as phone cards pack more minutes for fewer dollars. In addition distributors of phone cards target ethnic markets and print their national symbols on the phone cards to attract them (Gill, 2004 in Vertovec, 2004). Because of the substantial reduction in the costs of telephoning, migrants are able to participate in decisions concerning the household and still have a sense of being a family despite the physical distance. Telephoning has the added benefit of being able to talk to relatives in real time and to detect verbal cues, which can provide information about emotion, such as a sob or a shout (Hiltz and Turoff, 1993). Its disadvantage, however, is that it is unable to detect the non-verbal (e.g., frown, smiles) and contextual cues (setting of the person at the other end of the line).

The latest advancements in communications technology provides migrants with the ability to communicate via the internet using software packages that have the ability to detect, verbal, non-verbal, and contextual cues that provide additional information about what a person wants to convey (Garton and Wellman, 1995). With the aid of a web camera and instant messaging software like MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, or Skype, synchronous audio and video conversations are made possible, much like a face-to-face meeting that transpires in a visit, except that the parties in an

online conversation can be in different locations. E-mails are textual in nature and therefore in this form of communication both parties lack the verbal, non-verbal, and contextual cues. Hiltz and Turoff (1993) noted that vocalizations, like the loudness of the voice, can provide information about emotion. Facial expressions like smiles or frowns indicate feelings towards a person. Eye contact provides cues as to whom a statement is directed to. It could also provide a cue to the listener to pay attention and eventually respond. Body movements, which include gestures like nodding, are substitute for words. Nodding generally means in agreement with the speakers proposition. Psycho-physiological responses like yawning, blushing, or heavy breathing can provide information about the person's current emotional state.

Sending of remittances is another form of maintaining ties with the homeland. Remittances are the portions of migrants' incomes that are returned to their countries of origin (Maggard, 2004). It is used to maintain ties with their family and reduce their risk to economic shocks. Social capital in the form of mutual expectations and obligations that inhere in family or kinship ties help explain why migrants send remittances back home (Menjivar, et al, 1998). Others put altruism as reasons why migrants remit. Bougha-Hagbe (2006) defined altruism as "the willingness of someone, in this case a worker living outside his or her home country, to provide financial assistance to another in a situation of "hardship"." In his review of the classic work of Lucas and Stark's (1985), Carling (2008:584) noted that the authors classified remittance motives as pure altruism, pure self-interest, and tempered altruism or enlightened self-interest, but that attempts to tease out the right balance of altruism and self-interest to explain remittance motives had failed because Lucas and Stark have successfully argued that altruism is an important factor, but cannot fully explain remittance behavior. Carling noted that in both sending and receiving areas, the relationship of sender and receiver and their migration history (e.g., family

reunification status), and the remittance corridor (cost of remittance, exchange rates) also influenced remittance behavior. He added that time can also be a factor in remittance behavior as over time loans or obligations may have been paid in full or demographic processes such as family migration or the passing away of usual recipients come into play.

Menjivar, et al (1998) in comparing Filipino and Salvadoran remittance behaviors found that Filipinos send lesser amount of remittance than El Salvadorans because of varying overall strategy, the former may be to bring their relatives to the U.S., while the latter to support their relatives in El Salvador. They also found that Filipinos who live alone tend to send smaller amounts. They posit that those who live alone may have lesser financial responsibility, and they may be just gifts or to supplement existing income. However, they added that this type of living arrangement in the U.S. is rare for Filipinos.

Another form of transnational practice is return migration, whether for short-term visits, repeat/circulation, or permanent. Being face-to-face and on location, this is the most desired transnational practice aimed at maintaining and/or rekindling ties. Simmons and Guengant (1992:103) saw visits, circulation, and return migration as part of the culture of migration, which includes the maintenance of connection to home. These visits play an important role in the migration process, as return migrants usually become agents of change not only through their economic remittances, but also through their social remittances i.e., ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that they bring home with them from the host country (Levitt, 1998). They expose the origin community to information about the living condition in the host country and encourage others to migrate.

During these visits, return migrants do many beneficial things for their family, community, and society in general. Asiedu (2003) found that in Ghana, donations to

charitable institutions increased during peak return migration period such as Christmas, summer, and Easter, and the source of these donations come mainly from expatriates living in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, and Canada. In addition to their charitable giving, they helped in developing the economy through their expenditures (airfare, internal transportation, commercial accommodation, food and entertainment for oneself, friends, and relatives, and other incidental expenses) and investments, such as the purchase of a property and establishment of a business.

Advancements in telecommunications and transportation technology clearly facilitated these transnational practices. However, what further encouraged these practices were transnational state projects. Roberts, et al (1999:251) noted in their review of Mexican migration studies that the Mexican government has promoted transnational migration to avert the potential loss of remittances or investment, which would result if migrants were to move out permanently. This does not only pertain to the Mexican government, but to other less industrialized migrant-sending countries as well. The Philippines is an example. Basch, et al (1994) noted that the *balikbayan* (homecomers) program and *Bagong bayani* (new heroes and heroines) labeling of OFWs have been used by the Philippine government to encourage migrants to maintain their ties with the Philippines.

Studies of transnational Filipino families have mostly focused on the experiences of the families of unskilled labor migrants, such as female Filipino domestic workers (Asis, et.al, 2004; Zontini, 2004; Parreñas, 2000; Tacoli, 1999) who have no right to and/or cannot afford to reunite their families in their host country, and whose remittances are insufficient for the maintenance of the families in the Philippines. Financial strains are often so severe that they require the assistance of relatives so that husbands can continue working and contributing to the household

coffers. The focus on workers with the inability to reunite at host countries provides only a snapshot of the transnational lives of migrant workers.

Transnational family studies are missing the experiences of female professional workers who have right to and the wherewithal to reunite their families in their host country, and whose experiences can provide additional insights on transnational families going through the stages of separation to partial and/or full reunification (and sometimes, de-reunification or return migration) in the host country.

This study delves into the experiences of the transnational families of the other major female labor export of the Philippines – Filipino nurses in Ireland.

Chapter 3

Data and Methodology

In addressing the objectives of this dissertation, various qualitative research approaches were utilized. The results in this dissertation are based primarily on: a) qualitative data gathered through face-to-face individual in-depth interviews, couple interviews, mini-focus groups and focus group discussions of nurses or their spouses, non-participant and participant observations; b) review of laws, memorandums, administrative orders, and journal and news articles written about immigration in Ireland and the European Union, and emigration in the Philippines; and c) secondary analysis of statistical data from various agencies both in the Philippines and Ireland.

Qualitative Research in Migration Studies

The decision to use qualitative research methods as methods of inquiry in this research stems from the fact that qualitative research methods have been widely used in migration studies for over 30 years. The use of qualitative methods in migration studies beginning in the late 70's and early 80's, was a break away from using structured survey instruments that were then the dominant data gathering approach in the study of migration phenomena. Cornelius (1982), in his study of unapprehended (non-detained) illegal immigrants, modified his interview format and style from a structured interview to a more open-ended questioning when he conducted his fieldwork in 1978. He argued that "[u]ndocumented immigrants are an extremely heterogeneous population, representing a multiplicity of different situations in terms of legal status, migration history, commitment to long-term residence in the U.S., ties with the home community, family and occupational situation and so forth. It is virtually impossible, even with extensive pre-testing, to design a highly structured

questionnaire which would adequately capture the full range of attributes and experiences represented among this group of people" (p. 395).

Cornelius used snowball sampling to identify the respondents in his study. Each person interviewed provided him with names of relatives or friends and proper introduction. This helped him establish credibility and rapport among succeeding interviewees. This technique kept refusal rates low and facilitated the conduct of the interview. It also allowed him to cross-check information provided by one respondent with other respondents who were within the previous respondent's kinship/friendship network. He ended the snowball process when he observed that the snowball was already turning on itself i.e., the persons recommended by a previous interviewee have already been interviewed.

Bashi (1997) used snow-ball sampling technique to investigate how social networks of Western Indian immigrants were created and maintained, the ways people assisted each other in their migration to the United States, and how migrant networks assisted in the resettlement process, specifically in finding jobs and housing for newcomers. She stopped interviewing when, according to standard ethnographic practice, patterns became evident and she was not learning anything "new" with subsequent interviews (Bashi, 1997:25-26). The snowball technique also made it possible for her to gain access and interview the networks in the West Indies because it allowed her to claim that she was "sent" by the friend or relative she interviewed in New York. Like Cornelius, the snowball sampling allowed her to check the reliability and validity of the data. She generally was able to confirm the facts about events (e.g., the immigration and resettlement process) that members of the networks participated in by asking each member about their version of the events.

Portes (1987:342), in his study on the formation of the Cuban ethnic economy in Miami, diverged from the usual quantitative studies used to explain its formation

and to contrast it with the experience of other ethnic groups. Portes used verbal testimonies of entrepreneurs, community leaders, and others who witnessed and participated in the process, to reconstruct the process of Cuban ethnic economy formation. He validated their statements by comparing them with facts on the ground as the Cuban enclave economy was still an on-going reality at the time of the study.

Qualitative methods have also been used in studies of migration systems. Researchers had investigated systems formation by looking at trends and patterns of interaction between or among the countries concerned and identifying all the possible factors that could explain them, such as people and non-people linkages. This was achieved by reviewing the history, laws and policies and earlier work that had been made about the migration (including the genesis and role of migrant networks) between or among the countries under investigation and by examining the socio-economic, cultural and political context of the period under study (Balan, 1992; Garson, 1992; Makinwa-Adebusoye, 1992; Wilpert, 1992).

Qualitative methods of inquiry in the study of migrant Filipino workers

Several studies inquiring about migrant Filipino workers have also used qualitative methods. Constable's (1997) study about the Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong used purely qualitative methods in investigating domestic workers' forms of control or discipline in dealing with recruitment and placement agencies in the Philippines and Hong Kong; forms of resistance employed directed toward their employers (e.g., discursive forms of resistance --calling them monkeys); reasons for migration; recruitment process including fees and how they are marketed or treated as "goods" (e.g., "satisfaction guaranteed", "replacement guaranteed" if the employer is not satisfied); and various stories of exploitation .

Constable used participant observation and conducted in-depth interviews of Filipino domestic workers, Chinese employers, employment agency staff, migrant association leaders, volunteers, and government personnel. She visited and interviewed workers and volunteers at domestic workers' organizations and volunteered at a Mission for Migrant Filipino Workers spending 40-hour weeks typing and editing their letters to the Immigration and Labor departments, researching applicable rules and regulations, interviewing some workers and sometimes just listening to their stories. She also supplemented the interviews and participant observation with newspaper articles, flyers, local magazines, editorials, as well as reports from the Asian Migrant Center's survey on the Foreign Domestic Workers in Hong Kong. The supplements provided her with the important background and useful "facts and figures" to corroborate what she had observed on the ground.

The use of mixed methods appears to be a common methodological approach in the investigation of the migration phenomenon in the Philippines (Asis, 1995; Hintermann and Rigger, 2005; Ribas-Mateos and Oso, 2005). Employing a combination of survey, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussion to investigate the social transformation in source communities brought about by large-scale and sustained overseas labor migration, the triangulation of methods can provide rich details about how overseas employment evolved in the community, perceptions about the causes and consequences of migration, and its influence in the values and commitments of community members (Asis, 1995: 329).

Hintermann and Rigger (2005) applied a combination of in-depth interviews of immigrant Filipino nurses and analysis of official employment statistics on immigrants in Vienna from South and East Asia to understand their paths into Vienna's labor market i.e., who or what paved the way for other Filipinos to access Vienna's labor

market, and to ask about their migration history and the type of information and assistance they provide to their networks at the origin.

Ribas-Mateos and Oso (2005) also applied mixed methods in studying Filipino migrants in the labor markets of Spain. In-depth interviews at both the origin and destination areas were used to shed light on why Filipino women in Spain were concentrated in the service economy, specifically in domestic work, rather than in self-employment when they carry with them substantial human capital in the form of higher educational attainment.

The methods used in the aforementioned studies are employed in this present study -- snow-ball sampling technique, FGDs, in-depth interviews, non-participant and participant observation, collection of relevant secondary statistics, and extensive review of policies in both Ireland and the Philippines, including the European Union. Generally, the more qualitative approaches do not aim to gather generalizable data, but their local groundedness, flexibility, and richness and holism (Miles and Huberman, 1994:10) provide a rich deep understanding on the context, processes and feedbacks, and experiences that are being investigated in this study.

Research Design

The selection of Ireland as my research site was an offshoot of the survey I conducted in 2003 for my M.A. thesis[4] involving 246 nurses in two major hospitals in Davao City, Philippines. The study revealed that one out of every four nurses (27.0 percent) intended to apply for a job in Ireland. I was not surprised when the United States came up as the top destination (91.1 percent), nor was I surprised by the second and third frequently mentioned destination countries, which were the United Kingdom

[4] Arguillas, Florio Jr. O. (2004) "*International Migration of Filipino Nurses and Its Consequences on the Philippines Health Care System"* M.A. thesis. Cornell University

(62.1 percent) and Canada (28.6 percent), given our long history of deployment of workers there. Ireland (27.0 percent) was more surprising since the Philippines and Ireland have not had historical ties, and there has been very little presence of Filipinos there. In the early 1990's, there were only 257 Filipinos living in Ireland mostly as domestic workers employed in embassies, as missionaries, and as spouses of Irish nationals. The spike in numbers beginning in 2000, and the recentness of this event, encouraged me to investigate the origin of this migration system, the factors shaping it, and its consequences to the migrants and their families.

The field research had two phases. The ***first phase*** took place in Ireland from mid-June to mid-July 2007. Going to Ireland, the only contact I had was a Filipino Catholic priest, Fr. Dante Funelas, who was on sabbatical in Ireland and who I was able to get in touch with by posting an open letter looking for contacts to the e-group FilipinosinIreland@yahoogroups.com. One of the members of the e-group, who I learned later was a Filipino based in Turkey, responded to me and gave me the contact information of the priest. Thus, my first interviewee in Ireland was Fr. Dante Funelas who then introduced me to several of my key informants. Through chain and snowball referrals, where subsequent respondents were referred to me by prior ones, I interviewed in-depth a cross-section of Filipino migrant workers – domestics workers, sales workers, hospitality workers, hotel and restaurant workers, engineers, and nurses and generally asked them about their migration experience in Ireland. I hoped to get a sense of the living and working conditions in Ireland of Filipinos in different occupational categories, and to gain an understanding of the impact of dynamic Irish state policies on them and their families, both in Ireland and the Philippines.

I then proceeded to investigate the support structures that make transnational life possible. Through my interviews of a cross-section of migrant Filipino workers, I was able to determine the major players in the migration industry. My informants

referred me to five of the most important migrant recruiters; on two occasions in the second phase of the study I introduced myself via e-mail and set up appointments with the two leading Irish-based and owned international nurse recruitment agencies, who had been identified by my nurse respondents. To understand how recruiters became involved in the recruitment of Filipino workers, I interviewed them in-depth. The length of the interviews ranged from 45-120 minutes.

My informants also provided me with the names of the various pioneering ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland that helped maintain the cultural palate, style, and relationships with the Philippines. To understand how, when, and why these ethnic-Filipino businesses (restaurants, grocery stores, hair salon, and remittance centers) started, I interviewed the owners of these establishments individually for about 45-120 minutes. I was able to gain access to these entrepreneurs through the referrals of my informants.

To have an even broader perspective of the social, economic, cultural, and political context of the Filipinos in Ireland, I also interviewed the following key informants:

a) Hon. John Ferris, the Honorary Consul of the Philippines to Ireland;
b) Fr. Pat O'Connell, an Irish priest who was a missionary in the Philippines for 33 years and currently the Chaplain of the Filipino People in Ireland. Fr. Pat officiates regular Sunday Filipino masses in Ireland, but in different locations each week;
c) Michael Ancheta and Vicenta Kennedy who are members of the Editorial Board of the Filipino Forum, the only ethnic Filipino newspaper in Ireland;
d) leaders of the Philippine Cultural Committee in Ireland who are in-charge in the planning and execution of the annual Philippine Independence Day celebration in Ireland;

e) Mr. Vincent Galeon, the President of the Galway Filipino Community;
f) Ms. Sancha Magat of the Migrants Rights Center, a migrants right advocacy group; and
g) Mr. Cres Abragan, Chairperson of the Overseas Nurses Section of the Irish Nurses Organization (INO), Ireland's leading trade union for nurses.

My interview with Mr. Vincent Galeon provided insights into the evolution, structure, and function of Filipino associations which I pursued in the second phase of the study. The above key informants, especially Michael Ancheta and John Ferris, were instrumental in introducing me to various leaders of the Filipino associations in Ireland.

The ***second phase*** of the field research was carried out from mid-June to mid-July 2008, exactly one year after the first phase. Having learned a great deal about the social, economic, cultural, and political context of Filipinos in various occupational groups in Ireland from my previous fieldwork, I decided to focus my dissertation research on two main themes:

1) The evolution of the Philippines-Ireland migration system including the factors shaping it and the process of networks (including the migration industry), ethnic businesses, and community formation, as these are the support structures of current and potential migrants in the destination country.
2) The transnational families of married female Filipino nurses who arrived in Ireland prior to March 2004, especially the reunification process, the role (re)configurations in the household division of labor, and transnational practices (communication, cash and kind remittances, and visits) to maintain ties with the origin community.

I decided to concentrate on the families of married female nurses who arrived in Ireland prior to March 2004 for the following reasons. First, I focus on nurses because more than half of the Filipinos working in Ireland are engaged in the nursing profession and many were among the pioneers. Nurses have been present from the very beginning of this system and they and their families had experienced firsthand its dynamism. Second, I focus on married nurses because family reunification rights in Ireland prior to February 2007 generally applied only to married nurses, as they were the only ones with sufficient salaries that could meet the family reunification requirements. I focused on female nurses because a great majority of Filipino nurses in Ireland (82 percent) were women. In addition, the focus on families of married professional women also provides a different perspective in the study of transnational families, which have mostly focused on experiences of women in low skilled occupations (Parreñas, 2005; Zontini, 2004, Asis, et. al., 2004). Lastly, I focused on those who arrived before March 2004 because prior to this period the Irish state did not allow spouses of nurses to work, although they were provided rights to join their nurse-spouses. Having experienced the transition from lack of entitlement of spouses to work to being given entitlement to work, their experiences provide insights into the impact of dynamic state policies in the transnational lives of families of migrant professionals specifically on their reunification, transnational practices, and role reconfigurations in the household division of labor.

To address the study questions specified in the first chapter, I did the following in addition to the interviews conducted in the first phase of the research:

a) Interviewed six association leaders (all Presidents) about how their organization started, their leadership structure, functions, and programs. My key informants from the previous fieldwork introduced me to some of these leaders. On two occasions, it was the leaders who introduced me to

other association leaders. The interviews lasted from 1 to 4 hours. Most of them were conducted inside the homes of the leaders, while others were conducted at the location of their association events.

b) In three ethnic Filipino associations I also conducted non-participant observation where I observed some activities without participating in them. In one association, I observed their preparations for their own Philippine Independence Day celebration, which was mostly done by the leaders of the association. In two associations, I observed the election and swearing in of their new sets of officers. I also conducted participant observation in three associations where I was invited to play basketball in one, volleyball in another, and attended a Filipino mass with another. These methods of inquiry (participant and non-participant observation) have provided me insights into the functioning of the associations and the role played by the leaders and members in maintaining and sustaining the organizations. For example, I learned as an observer in community elections that the electoral process, especially the vote counting, was akin to the local and national election processes in the Philippines complete with Comelec officials, volunteer tabulators, and poll watchers. As participant observer in sports activities I learned that these activities are the ones that regularly (oftentimes on a weekly basis) bring together, not just the players, but the entire community as they tag along families and friends to these activities with everyone having a good time either by playing, cheering, chatting at the sidelines, and in consolidating the food/snacks for the usual pre- or post-game potluck.

c) I also interviewed in-depth three leading recruiters of Filipinos workers who had eluded me during the first phase of the fieldwork. One was

involved in an escort service, a human smuggling operation operated by corrupt officials at the Philippines' gateway airport that escorts or guides undocumented workers so they can avoid the airport's security checks and leave the country without proper exit clearance from the Philippine government. I was able to get in touch with this recruiter through the referral of the recruiter's relative whom I met at a community event. Two others were Irish-based professional recruitment agents who specialized in the recruitment and deployment of nurses. I reached them through a personal introduction via e-mail and subsequently arranged an appointment for interview. The interview with these recruiters lasted between one to two hours. One interview was conducted at the respondent's residence, while the other two were held at their place of business.

d) I conducted two mini-focus groups of married female nurses i.e., consisting of four to five participants rather than a minimum of six as would be the case in a regular FGD. These mini-focus groups were supposed to be regular FGDs, but in both instances some of those who committed to participate were not able to come. The mini-FGDs were held during community events in quiet rooms or corners where the events were being held and lasted between 1.5 to two hours. The participants were recruited with the help of community leaders. The discussion focused on their opinions and experiences regarding Ireland's immigration policies, family reunification and role (re)configurations in the division of labor in the household 1) before the migration of the nurse-spouse, 2) after migration the migration of the nurse-spouse but before reunification, and 3) after reunification. In addition, their transnational practices of communication, cash and kind remittances, and visits were also covered. Themes that

emerged during the discussion were also pursued, including the reasons so many spouses of nurses resigned from their jobs to take care of their children full time. The use of FGDs presented several advantages: it allowed for a deeper understanding of the issues presented by the facilitator, as participants were given the opportunity to air their perspectives and react to the opinion of others. FGDs are also flexible in that they are able to pursue themes that crop up during the discussion.

e) I conducted two focus groups consisting of 6 to 11 husbands of nurses. These focused on family reunification and on role (re)configurations in the division of labor in the household 1) before the migration of the nurse-spouse, 2) after the migration of the nurse-spouse but before reunification, and 3) after reunification. Participants were selected by the community leaders whom I approached for assistance in setting up the FGDs. Some of the participants knew each other because they reside in the same county in Ireland, but this did not inhibit them from sharing their opinion about the topics discussed. On the contrary, it appeared to contribute to a more engaging discussion as they were comfortable with the topics, the moderator, and with the participants in the FGD. Themes that emerged in the nurses' group discussion, such as the spouses' resignation from their jobs, were also followed-up in these FGDs to get the husbands' perspective. Both men's FGDs lasted 1.5 hours.

f) To broaden my perspective on the transnational lives of Filipino nurses and their families in Ireland, I conducted nine couple interviews where the wife was a nurse, seven individual in-depth interviews of husbands of nurses, and nine in-depth individual interviews of married female nurses. The respondents were indentified through snowball referrals. The couple

interviews ranged from 2 to 4 hours, while individual in-depth interviews ranged from 1 to 4 hours. Most individual in-depth interviews were conducted at the respondents' home, in their place of business, in their places of work after their shifts, or in a quiet corner of a coffee shop. All, but one of the couple interviews were conducted in the respondents' home. Respondent burden appeared not to be an issue even on interviews lasting three to four hours; all extended interviews included lunch or dinner invitations by the respondent(s) with the interview continuing over lunch or dinner. In addition to family reunification, role reconfigurations in the household division of labor, and transnational practices, I also asked about migration decision-making and migration experience of informants, their work and living conditions in Ireland, and the lifestyle changes they had experienced as a result of migration.

The frequency of individual interviews, couple interviews, mini-focus groups, and regular focus groups conducted for this study are shown in Table 3. 1. A photo of one of the FGDs of husbands of nurses is shown in Figures 3.1.

The protocol employed to address the study questions approved by Cornell's Institutional Review Board. Confidentiality was promised to the respondents and no identifiable information was included in the write-up except when respondents wished to be on the record. Although nearly all respondents agreed to be on the record, pseudonyms were used in lieu of the actual names of recruiters, nurses, and their spouses. However, for key informants who were easily identifiable, such as the Honorary Consul, the Chaplain of the Filipino people, business owners, and community leaders, their actual names are mentioned when necessary in the write-up.

Table 3.1. Frequency of individual and couple interviews, mini- and regular focus group discussions.

Type of Interview	**Frequency**
Individual in-depth Interviews	
Recruitment Agents	8
Business Owners	7
Community Leaders	7
Other key informants (Honorary Consul, migrant rights advocates, Editors of Filipino Forum, Philippine Cultural Committee, Irish Nurses Organization, Chaplain of the Filipino People, Filipino Catholic priest, Spiritian Father)	8
Married Female Nurses	9
Husbands of nurses	7
Couple Interviews	9
Mini-FGDs (4-5 participants) of married female nurses	2
FGDs (6-11 participants) of husbands of nurses	2

Figure 3.1 Photo showing focus group discussion of husband of nurses who are members of the hometown association Kaliwat Iliganon Association Ireland.

Chapter 4

The Context of Filipino Migration to Ireland and the Role of the States

Conditions in the Philippines: Forces leading to the emigration of Filipinos to Ireland

The Philippines is one of many labor-exporting countries. Its tradition of sending workers abroad dates back to the early 1900's in the plantations of Hawaii, but it was in the mid-60's when labor export began to be extremely significant. President Marcos and succeeding presidents were all too happy to send Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs), as they were called then, to relieve the pressure of rising unemployment in the country. The export of Filipino manpower was supposed to be a temporary stop-gap measure to alleviate the rising unemployment, but the practice continues unabated. In fact, it was then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who encouraged U.S. employers to recruit Filipino workers during her State visit in 2003. She also described herself as the CEO of a global enterprise of eight million Filipinos working and living abroad (Rodriguez, 2010).

Aside from relieving the pressure of unemployment, the continued exportation of labor is a source of much needed dollar reserves that are needed to pay for the country's debts. This is another reason the Philippine government does not discourage the departure of its workers to foreign lands. In 2009, remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), as they are called now, totaled US $17.3 billion, of which, US$33.5 million came from Ireland. The US$ 17.3 billion remittance is nearly half the combined earnings from agriculture, forestry, mining, and manufacturing exports, all of which total US $37.5 billion.

The continuous outflow of workers has created a culture of migration in the Philippines, and this is encouraged by the "New Heroes" label the Philippine

government has given the OFWs, a label which is therefore to be emulated. The nursing profession is probably the profession in which the culture of migration is most pervasive and diffused. Corcega et al (2000) found that in 1998 nearly half (49.3 percent) of all Filipino nurses were working abroad. In 2004, Arguillas found in a survey of 246 Filipino nurses in Davao City that over 90 percent of them had intentions to work abroad. The top three reasons they cited for wanting to work abroad were low pay in the Philippines (89.6 percent), the need to help the family (78.3 percent), and to gain the latest knowledge and skills in nursing (74.2 percent).

When Filipino nurses started migrating to Ireland in 2000, the Philippines had been, as a former colony of the United States, deeply engaged in the global economy. At around the time, $11.4 billion (30 percent) of the Philippines' $38 billion dollar export earnings came from the U.S. alone, 18 percent came from Europe, 48.7 percent came from all of Asia, and the remainder (3.3 percent) from the rest of the world[5]. The level of unemployment in the Philippines ranged from 9-11 percent[6] and external debt was $50 billion[7].

The Philippines and Ireland have maintained diplomatic ties since July 9, 1946. According to an overview document of the diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Ireland "both countries have since [1946] maintained friendly contacts, aided by the important interaction between the two countries within the framework of various ASEAN-EU fora and multilateral organizations." However, what was lacking between these two countries was a bilateral agreement, especially in terms of labor migration.

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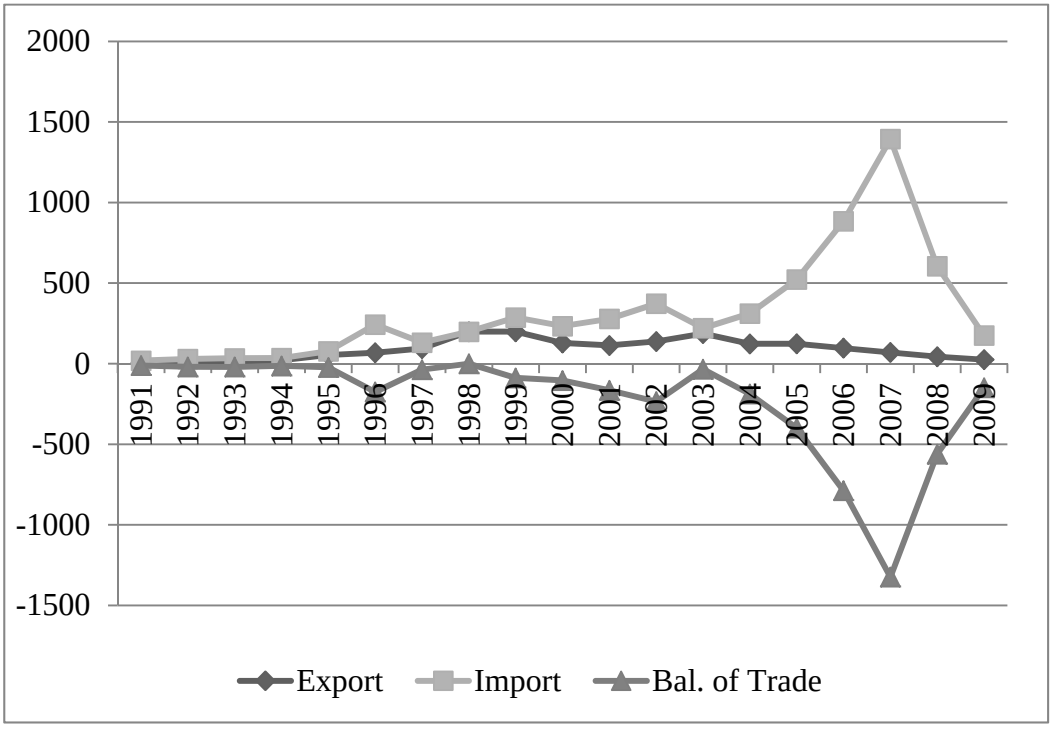
[5] Source: Philippine Statistical Yearbook, 2002: Chapter 7.1 – Direction of Trade

[6] Source: Philippine Labor Force Survey January 2000

[7] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGDF2002/Resources/countrytables-reg-external-debt.pdf accessed February 25, 2009

Although trade relations have long existed between the Philippines and Ireland, they were not sufficient to ignite Filipino migration to Ireland. Figure 4.1 shows a progression in trade between the two countries, but the direction of trade was always favorable to Ireland. The gap widened around the time of the Celtic Tiger and the initiation of the large-scale migration of Filipinos to Ireland. It has declined starting in 2008 as a result of the global recession, but the balance of trade remains to the disadvantage of the Philippines.



Source: Foreign Trade Statistics Section
Industry and Trade Statistics Department
National Statistics Office
Republic of the Philippines

Figure 4.1. Direction of Trade between Philippines and Ireland (in US$ million):1991-2009

Motivations of Nurses for working in Ireland

But what motivated nurses to work in Ireland? The primary motivation of Filipinos to work overseas is economic. The perceived higher pay abroad enables labor migrants to improve the economic status of their families in the Philippines. In the Philippines entry-level nurses earn between U.S. $150 to $210 per month. Filipino nurses recruited from other countries such as Oman and Saudi Arabia were earning an equivalent of $420 and $840 per month, respectively before coming to Ireland. In Ireland, they could earn $4,200 per month (about 20 times the Philippine salary). Others cited their desire to acquire new skills and mentioned that Ireland is an attractive destination because it is a democratic country.

Filipinos also choose Ireland and are well received there, in part, because they share a common religion. The Philippines was ruled by Spain for 333 years until its independence in 1898. The Christianization of Philippines resulted in the predominance of Catholics in the county. The departure of the Spanish friars left a considerable void, so, in the early 1920's Irish Redemptorists (1926), Columbans (1929) and Dominicans started missions in the Philippines.

Other than economic motivation, the reasons for working in Ireland vary depending on whether nurses were recruited directly from the Philippines or from an intermediate destination. Those who were hired from the Philippines were motivated by poor working conditions at home, including poor staffing ratios, lack of opportunities for professional development, and low pay. Several nurses who were hired directly from Saudi Arabia added a cultural dimension to the list, specifically that their former country of employment is a less "open" society i.e., that women must have a minder when they go out shopping, cannot be seen talking to a man outside on the streets, and must usually be covered and wearing black. Men complained of cultural restrictions such as prohibitions on alcoholic beverages and eating pork,

among other things. They added “there is no life in Saudi Arabia, only money.” In addition, migrants often have no property and citizenship rights.

Those recruited from Oman were particularly concerned about job security. Oman is a freer, more open society than other Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia. Women can be seen with men, they can wear comfortable dresses, they can talk to men in the streets, there are Catholic churches where they can practice their faith, and any religion can practice their faith as long as they don’t recruit or convert others. Since Oman started to introduce their local nurse graduates to the health care system, however, Filipino migrants have become increasingly concerned about job security. Oman is seen as prioritizing their home grown nurses over other nationals. Non-Omanis holding nursing positions had been receiving letters indicating that their positions had been assigned to Omanis. On those occasions, contracts were not renewed and many nurses had to return to their home countries. “You are Omanized” is how Filipinos dubbed this situation, and the uncertainty surrounding the possibility of being Omanized created an incentive to find more secure employment.

I did not measure how motivated those starting from the Philippines really were in their desire to work in Ireland, but what they gave up and faced would provide an idea as to their resolve. First, they resigned from their jobs or decided not to renew their contracts. Second, some sold properties or livestock and/or incurred debts to pay for placement fees. Third, these decisions are not made in isolation. They often entailed the consultation and approval of family members as part of their survival strategy and insurance against risks. Fourth, many of them subjected themselves to the nerve-wracking ordeal of an escort service. Fifth, and more importantly, they were not even guaranteed a full-time job initially. Their initial visa was only good for three months – good enough for the six weeks adaptation period (period of assessment and training), and an additional six weeks if they failed the initial trial period. During the

adaptation period, they were only paid student rates. Thus, there was tremendous pressure on them to succeed, become registered, and be fully paid because of the sacrifices that they made and because of the shame that is corollary to failure. There is the shame of returning home as a failure or the shame of ending up working as a care assistant in Ireland, rather than as a registered nurse.

Conditions in Ireland: Forces leading to the immigration of Filipinos to Ireland

The Irish economy experienced unprecedented growth in the decade of the 1990's. GNP registered a sustained average growth of 7.5 percent from 1994 to 1999 while GDP posted an average growth of 8.4 percent in the same period. The unemployment rate was low and so was inflation. This transformed what once was a traditional emigrant-sending nation into an immigrant-receiving nation. This transformation was swift. Just seven years prior to 1994, Ireland's economy was in crisis -- her debt was 125% of GNP. Her economy was so bad *The Economist*, in January 1988, described Ireland as the "Poorest of the Rich," the rich referring to the countries in northwest Europe[8].

Murphy (2000) has attributed the success of the economy in the 1990's in Ireland to the Europeanization of the Irish economy and globalization in the form of investments from multinational corporations (MNCs), specifically of those from the United States. These MNCs were looking for a platform in Europe where they could launch their products (computers, software packages, chemicals, phones, pharmaceuticals, cola, and others) for the European market. Ireland was easily able to attract the MNCs because it has been fully committed to the Europeanization process,

[8] After a decade of boom, Ireland was caught in a recession starting in 2007. In November 2010, the European Union nations agreed to bailout Ireland in the amount of $89.4 billion. A massive banking crisis partly caused by bad loans and the housing crisis that hit the United States, which had global impact that spilled over to Ireland.

having been a member of the European Economic Community (EEC) since 1973, and having signed on to be part of the Single European Market in 1992 (and, later, in the European Monetary Union in 1999); it has an English speaking and increasingly computer literate workforce; and a low corporate tax regime at between 10 and 12.5 percent. Murphy argued that Ireland's lack of industrialization, which was an economic bane in the past, worked in their favor and made it possible for the government to provide MNCs those tax incentives. It would have been impossible in a highly industrialized atmosphere. Murphy also added that the growth of the Irish economy was partly a product of the ingenuity of accountants by employing a transfer pricing scheme.

Another explanation that contributed to the economic growth in Ireland, Bloom and Canning (2003) argued, was the decline in fertility. The legalization of contraceptives in Ireland in 1979 produced a "demographic dividend" as the supply of working age population surged relative to the youth and elderly population. The productivity of this workforce coupled with a favorable policy environment helped give birth to the Celtic Tiger.

The economic boom in the mid-90s led to increased demand for workers which could not be fully supplied from within Ireland. Several factors accounted for the shortage of workers in specific skill sectors. The education sector was unable and unprepared to produce enough Irish workers with the professional skills needed in the construction, computers, electronic, chemical, health care (including nursing), and other high-tech sectors, because of the swift pace of change in Ireland. All over Europe, fertility levels were declining and populations were ageing. This worked against specific skills sectors like nursing, which relied on a pool of young, mostly female labor. At the same time, the economic boom provided Irish youth with other career options. Barret and Rust (2009:11) noted that "these demographic and societal

changes have contributed to significant, long-term labor shortages in the healthcare sector."

In the hope of attracting to Ireland skilled and qualified Irish and other EU nationals working in other countries, in 1999 Foras Aiseanna Saothair (FAS), the Irish Training and Employment Authority launched a Jobs Ireland campaign outside of Ireland. Ireland's Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment (DETE) likewise invested in the FAS European Employment Service (EURES) scheme. EURES is a network of all Employment Services throughout the European Union, Iceland and Norway. Through the advertisement of job openings in Ireland, Irish employers were linked to European job-seekers in all employment offices of EU member states. Interested applicants could simply submit their CVs to the EURES, and these would be made available to the Irish employers. Jobs were posted in construction, hotel and catering, information technology, tele-servicing, nursing, and the electronic sectors. They were also looking for workers who were fluent in English or at least have the basics of it. As of 1999, there were only 15 EU countries. The 10 accession states were still five years away from being incorporated into the EU. Despite the implementation of these strategies, the schemes only attracted a handful of qualified Europeans, which led the Irish State to expand the search outside of the EU and allowed for the recruitment of non-EU nationals, subject to certain conditions. One of the countries identified by the Irish-based placement agencies was the Philippines.

The skills shortage in Ireland in the year 2000 was so acute that a single newspaper advertisement was all that was needed by a newly established placement agency to jumpstart its business. Apparently employers were on the lookout for ads from placement agencies supplying skilled English speaking workers.

> "We only posted a single ad in the newspaper and we received multiple calls and requests for workers. One of the clients was a very popular hotel and they were looking for workers. We supplied them, and the hotel owner's word-of-mouth was worth a thousand advertisements."
>
> *–Filipino-Irish recruiter*

Causes of the nursing shortage in Ireland

One of the skills sector hit hard by the labor shortage in Ireland was the health services sector. In the mid-90's it was experiencing severe nursing shortage. Not only was the recruitment of students for general nursing courses declining from a little over one thousand in the period 1990-1995 to under 1,000 from 1996 onwards (Wells and McElwee, 2000), it was coupled with a very fast turnover in the nursing profession with many leaving Ireland for other countries and others leaving the profession altogether.

The *World of Irish Nursing* (WIN), the journal publication of the Irish Nurses Organization, the largest union of nurses and midwives in Ireland, had highlighted in several articles and editorials the various reasons for the difficulty in retaining staff and recruiting students in the nursing profession. Among them were:

Low pay. There is little or no premium paid for working during unsocial hours[9]. For those working in Dublin, there is no weighting allowance to offset the higher cost of living. A nurse in a remote location in Ireland, in similar position and qualifications as a nurse in Dublin, will get the same salary as the latter even though the former's cost of living is significantly lower.

Pension policy. A nurse must have 40 years permanent service in order to obtain a full pension. This is often impossible to achieve given that the profession is predominantly women who must balance work and family responsibilities, including

[9] Unsocial hours: Any time on Saturday (midnight to midnight) and any week day after 8 pm and before 6 am. All time on Sundays and Public Holidays (midnight to midnight):

child care and elderly care, and often take career breaks in order to raise a family or care for an elderly relative.

Lack of career progression. Long service tends not to be recognized in the form of salary increases and hardly any promotional posts are created. Temporary employment status is oftentimes prolonged. There is also no incremental credit for work done overseas in a professional capacity as a registered nurse. This was considered the meanest form of exploitation (WIN, April 1999).

Work hours. Nurses work four hours per week longer than other professionals. This means that they work five weeks more annually than other professional occupations. Some are required to work unpaid overtime. Working hours are inflexible and not family friendly. Given that 93% of Irish nurses are women and society's primary care providers in terms of raising family or looking after elderly relatives, they require flexible, family-friendly hours, but many are unable to secure this arrangement (WIN, December 1998). It is almost impossible for them to hold down full time jobs while raising children.

Childcare crisis. Many high skilled nurses are forced out of work because they can not give sufficient care to their children, given a lack of affordable and dependable childcare facilities near or at their place of work (WIN, May 1999). This lack of childcare facilities is still not being addressed in many health institutions despite the obvious predominance of women in this profession.

Growing trend toward part-time and job sharing. While nurses are able to secure part-time and job sharing schemes with their employers, this tends to compound the issue of nursing shortage, because part-timers and job-shares have poor career opportunities, and they are often asked to go on overtime because of their flat rate.

Health, safety and security challenges. Aside from the occupational hazards associated with caring for a client/patient, there are also reports of violence in the workplace, sexual harassment and bullying. Also, some nursing facilities are located in isolated areas where even the Garda (police) will not go without a partner, but where nurses are expected to respond to knocks on the door at unsocial hours.

Counterproductive nursing student recruitment strategy. Publicity campaigns to attract students to go into nursing highlighted the portability of the profession by stipulating the "potential for travel" (WIN, July 1999). This has been counterproductive because newly registered Irish nurses are then welcomed by recruiters who place Irish nurses for overseas job.

Active recruitment of Irish nurses for work overseas. The Irish nursing workforce continues to get drained by the active recruitment of placement agencies for overseas jobs. At the WIN journal, even during times of nursing shortages, several Ireland-based placement agencies advertise jobs for the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait); Australia, Holland, Scotland, Canada and the U.S. There are also placements "where they can take their commitment further still where it is more needed" like Cambodia, Russia, Kenya, Malawi, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

Demographic structure. The age structure of the population in Ireland has played a big factor in the nursing shortage. Ireland's declining and below replacement fertility level, though partly responsible for the birth of the Celtic Tiger, has also been responsible for declining family size and declining number of youths. In the late 90's, there were comparatively few 17-19 year old girls in the population, who were usually the favored candidates in the nursing profession. In 1996 there were 168,000 17-19 year-olds and by 2026 it is projected to decline to 104,000 – a drop of about 40 percent. With the economic boom, other career opportunities became available for

girls. Yet, the demand for nurses is expected to increase immensely. For one, the nursing profession is aging. The modal age group of nurses in Ireland is 45-49. Secondly, in 1996 there were 89,800 Irish over 80 years old and the number is expected to increase to 155,000 by 2026.

Value of Nurses. Other factors that have contributed to the nursing shortage in Ireland were (1) the failure of the health service to recognize the true worth of nurses, which made the Irish nurses feel that they were undervalued; (2) the Irish public's perception of a lack of status of nursing; and (3) lack of planning and failure of the government to heed the call of nurses to address the nursing shortage.

Consequences of the nursing shortage in Ireland

Mainly due to the conditions identified above, Ireland experienced a rapid turnover and shortage of nurses that led to the decrease in health care services. Beds were closed directly as a result of lack of staff, as in the case of the Mater hospital in October of 1999. Elective surgeries were postponed or cancelled. Accessing treatments were delayed and there were long waits in the Accident and Emergency departments of medical institutions. Irish nurses were mentally and physically exhausted, as they were asked to work over and above their normal hours just to maintain levels of service. These conditions contributed to the already negative perception of the public on the status of the profession, and to the unattractiveness of nursing careers to young people coming of age. In 1998, many student nursing positions went unfilled (WIN, January 1999).

The consequences of the nursing shortage had finally reached a point at which they could no longer be ignored by the government. Since the health service could not fill the vacancies from within Ireland, as Irish nurses were also leaving, and the Irish youth showed lack of interest, one immediate solution was to recruit nurses from

other countries. The recruitment of foreign nurses presented dual advantages to Ireland's health care system. Not only were they able to quickly acquire highly skilled nurses to fill critical shortages with little or no training required, but their health care system, and economy in general, also saved money by – a) minimizing or altogether abandoning the need for the services of agency nurses, which is more expensive to maintain than hiring foreign nurses; and b) not having to spend money for the education of the nurses, as this was borne by the source countries. Thus, the recruitment of foreign nurses was both a health care and economic strategy. An unintended consequence, however, of having alternative sources of nurses was that it delayed action and solutions on the issues that contributed to the shortage of nurses in Ireland.

Foreign nurses must speak or have basic English language skills in order to practice their profession in Ireland. Since Ireland could not fill all nursing positions from within the EU, they expanded their search outside the EU. Upon the instigation of Department of Health and Children in cooperation with Departments of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, Equality and Law Reform and An Bord Altranais (Irish Nursing Board), they sorted out the issues for recruiting nurses from non-EEA countries. These issues include visa requirements, work permits, and nursing qualifications and adaptation among others. Nurses from the Philippines were targeted for recruitment because of their academic and training qualifications, which are well recognized in the U.S. and the U.K. Thus, as the Secretary General of the Department of Health and Children said in the hearing of the Committee of Public Accounts: "There is a ready welcome for them (i.e., Filipino Nurses) in the Irish System." Although there was a brief delay in recruitment because the Professional Regulation Commission in the Philippines was slow to provide the An Bord Altranais (Irish Nursing Board) with certification that attests to the

qualifications of Filipino nurses, once this issue was resolved in the 2nd quarter of 2000, Filipino nurses started arriving.

The Philippines in the International Division of Nursing Labor

Ireland focused its recruitment on Filipino nurses because the Philippines is a major player in the international division of nursing labor. From 1992-2009 data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) revealed that the Philippines deployed nurses to 86 countries. In 1998, half (49.3 percent) of the registered nurses in the Philippines were working abroad, 8.9 percent were employed as nurses locally and the remaining 41.8 percent were either unemployed or working in non-nursing professions (Corcega, et al. 2000). Filipino nurses are in demand abroad because they have established a reputation for professional, tender-loving-care service outside the Philippines. They speak English, which is the medium of instruction in colleges and universities and is the official language used in the national print media as well as in government proceedings, meetings, and publications; and their nursing curriculum (training) is geared for local and international markets.

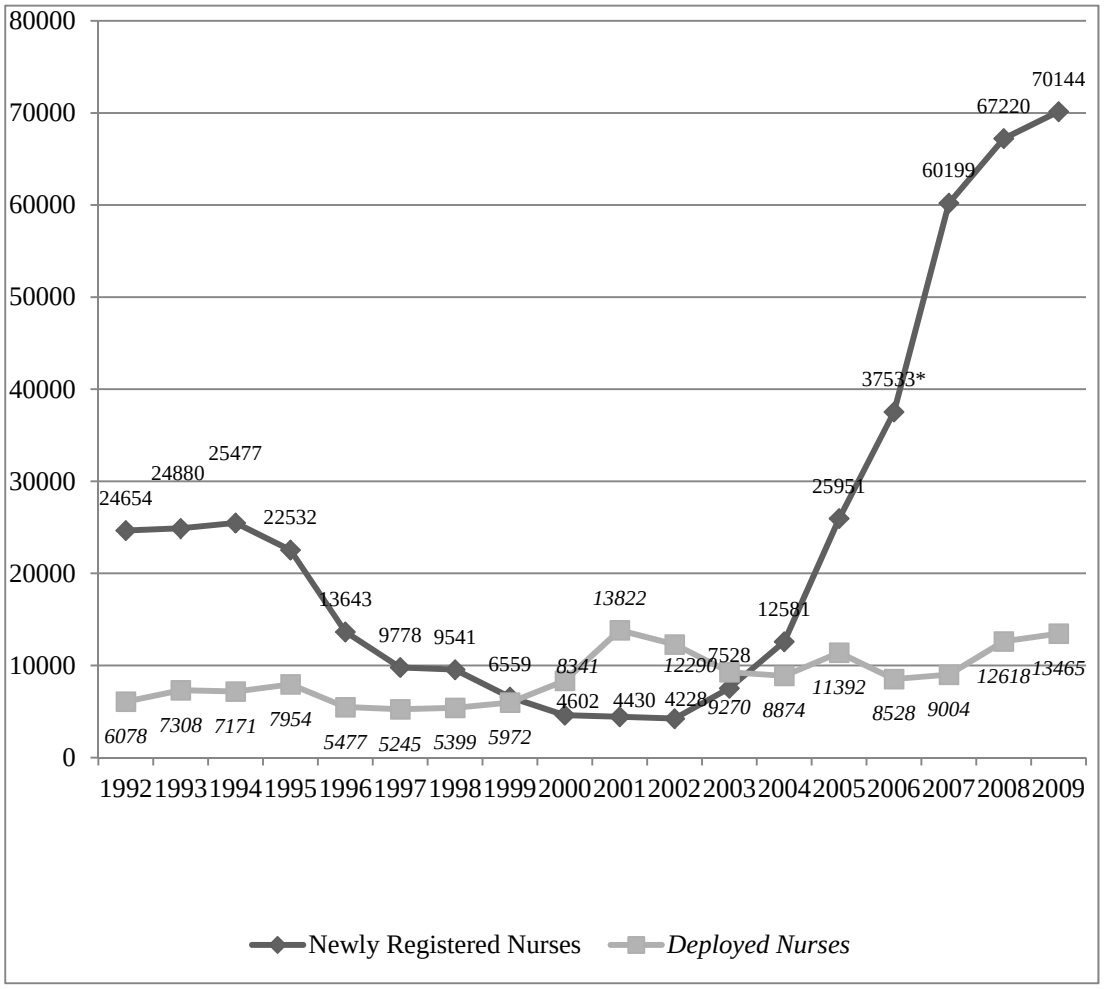
The Philippines is expected to continue to be a major player in the international division of nursing labor. As I have indicated, over 90 percent of nurses interviewed by Arguillas in 2004 intended to work abroad, and the number of nurses produced by the Philippines continues to grow at an astounding rate triggered by the latest wave of Filipino nurse out-migration. This wave has been attributed to the opening of the labor markets in the U.K. in 1999 and Ireland in 2000 for Filipino nurses and other non-EU/EEA nationals.

Figure 4.2 shows that these new markets for Filipino nurses contributed to nurse deployment outpacing nurse production for the first time in a long while (between 2000 and 2003). At the same time, however, there was an increase in

nursing enrolment, with recent high school graduates being joined by course shifters, second coursers (i.e., college degree holders taking a second degree) and licensed physicians training to become nurses. They enrolled in nursing in the hopes of landing a job abroad. By 2004, nurse production caught up with deployment as nursing students, who entered college in 2000, graduated and passed the nursing licensure exams that year.

From 2000-2009, the Philippines deployed an average of 10,760 nurses annually. In the early part of that period (2000-2003) nurse production averaged 6,500 annually, but it rose sharply thereafter. In 2009, nurse production was 24 times the number in 2000 (Figure 4.3). This sharp increase in production is correlated with the rise in the number of nursing schools and enrollment (Figure 4.4). In 2000 there were only 182 nursing schools. By 2009, there were 477 nursing schools which is 2.6 times the 2000 level. Figure 4.5 shows that enrolment increased sixteen-fold from 25,951 in AY 1999-2000 to 410,362 in AY 2008-2009. At its peak in AY 2006-2007, enrolment was 18 times the AY 1999-2000 level.

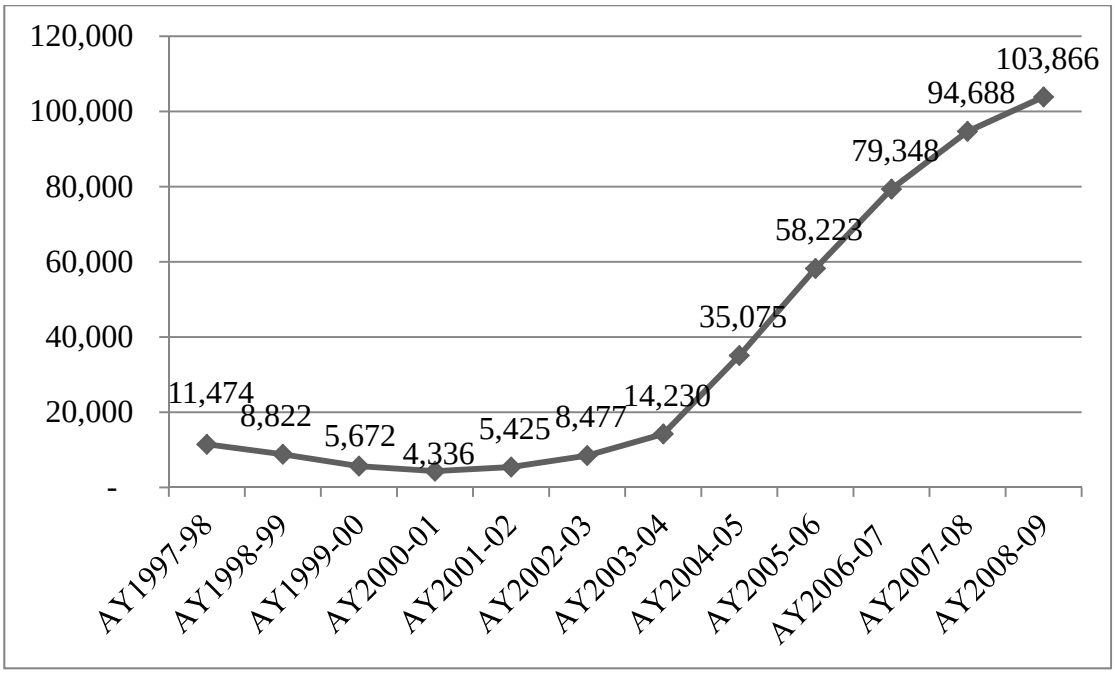
Clearly, the Philippines has mass produced nurses, but this raises the question of the quality of the nursing professionals produced in the Philippines. With the commercialization of nursing education, as evinced by the mushrooming of nursing schools and increase in enrollment, maintaining quality nursing education and standards is a challenge. There are ominous signs that quality and standards have taken a serious blow. For one, exam questions were leaked in the June 2006 licensure exam and despite the advantage it provided to those who got hold of the leaked questions only 42 percent passed the exam nationwide. The annual nursing licensure exam passing rates have been declining since 2005 (Figure 4.6). The 2009 passing rate was 11 percentage points lower than its 2005 level (51.6 versus 40.7 percent, respectively).



Sources: New Nurses (1992-2002) Baldago, Lily Ann R. "Impact of Nursing Mobility on Nursing Schools: The Mushrooming of Nursing Schools in the Philippines." Paper presented at the Nurses' Mobility obal Congress, March 26-28, 2003 at the Manila Midtown Hotel, Ermita, Manila, Philippines
New Nurses (2003-2009) – Professional Regulation Commission
Deployed Nurses (1992-2009) - Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

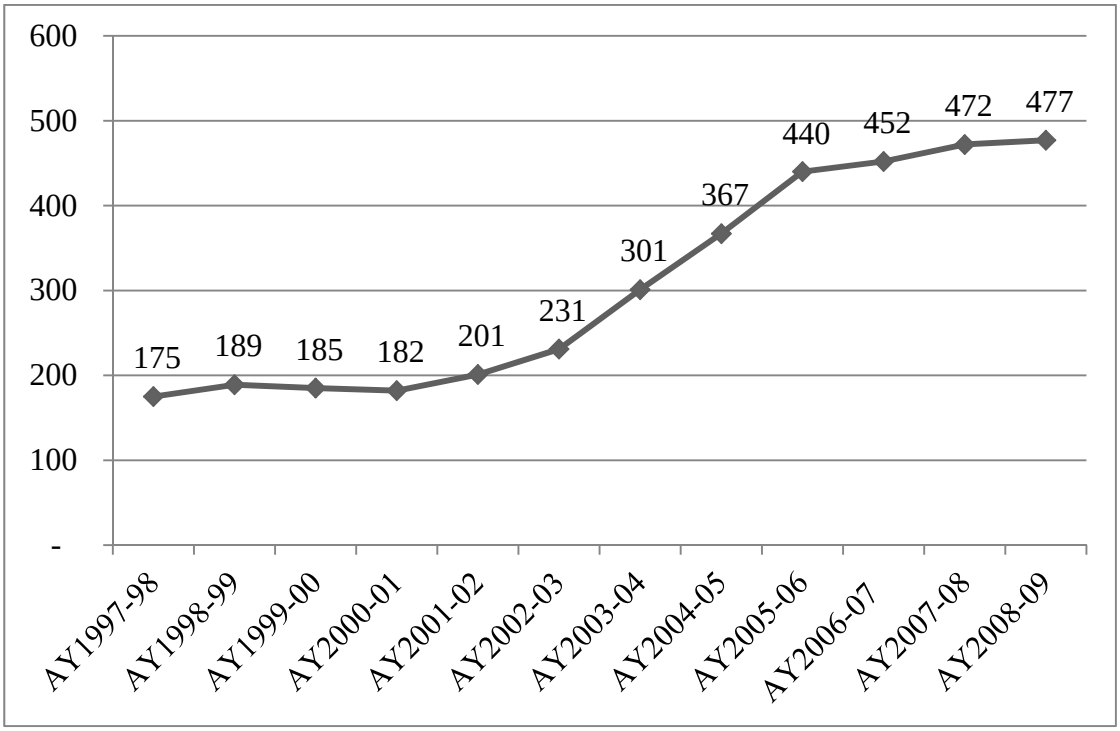
Note: Deployed nurses (figures in italics) is sum of Nurse Professional and Nursing Personnel (NEC) in the POEA database
The figure for 2006 includes the 17,821 who passed the June 2006 board exam but were ordered to retake the exam because of a nursing scandal – nursing board exam questions were leaked prior to the examination date.

Figure 4.2. Filipino Nurse Production versus Nurse Deployment: 1992-2009



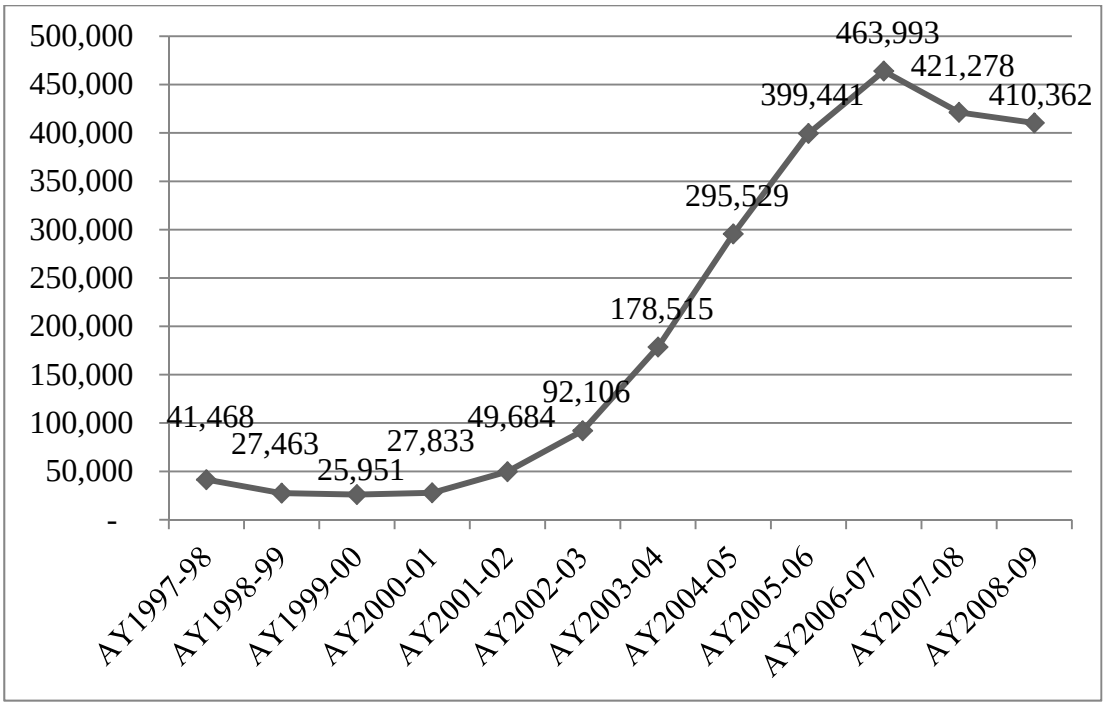
Source: Commission on Higher Education, 2010

Figure 4.3 Annual Graduates in Nursing: 1997-2009



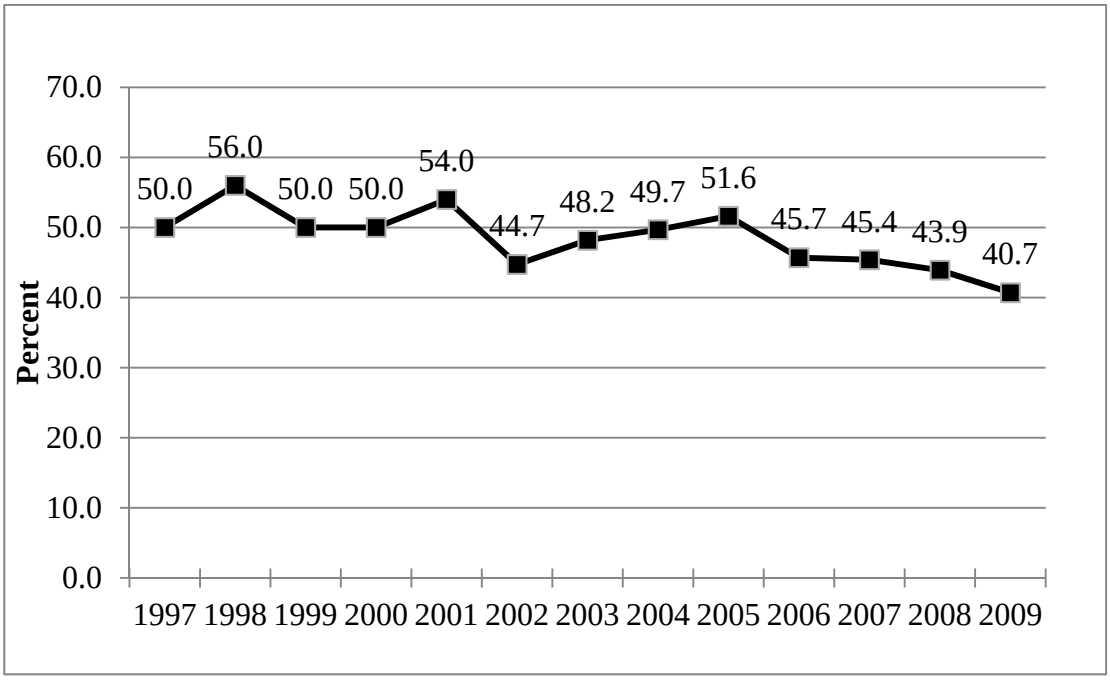
Source: Commission on Higher Education, 2010

Figure 4.4 No. of Nursing Schools: 1997-2009



Source: Commission on Higher Education, 2010

Figure 4.5 Annual Enrollments in Nursing: 1997-2009



Source: Commission on Higher Education, 2010

Figure 4.6 Nursing Licensure Exam Passing Rate: 1997-2009

The Philippine State and Evolving Legal Framework

As a sending state, the Philippines deliberately exports large numbers of workers, but with certain standards of protection. In 1982 the Philippines created the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) to manage the migration of Filipino workers overseas, promote and develop the overseas employment program, protect the rights of migrant workers, regulate private sector participation in recruitment and overseas placement, maintain a registry of skills, and secure the best terms of employment for OFWs. Of significant importance is the role of the POEA in the "determination, formulation, and review of employment standards in accordance with the market development thrusts and welfare objectives of the overseas employment program and the prevailing market conditions (www.poea.gov.ph)."

To hire a worker from the Philippines, a foreign principal or employer must identify and work with a POEA licensed local private agency. A Special Power of Attorney (SPA), recruitment agreement or service agreement must be issued by the principal or employer to the POEA-licensed recruitment agency. Foreign employers must also submit to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) at the Philippine Embassy/Consulate documents proving the legitimacy of the company, a manpower request indicating the position and salary of the workers, as well as an employment contract that meets at least the minimum provisions required by the POEA.

The 1991 Rules and Regulations Governing Overseas Employment (RRGOE) Book 5, Rule 2, Section 2, which is on the minimum provisions for contracts in effect in 2000 when recruitment of Filipino workers to Ireland started, stipulates that the following shall be considered the minimum requirements for contracts of employment:

a. Guaranteed wages, for regular working hours and overtime pay for services rendered beyond regular work hours in accordance with the standards established by the Administration;

b. Free transportation from point of hire to site of employment and return;

c. Free emergency medical and dental treatment and facilities;

d. Just causes for the termination of the contract or of the services of the workers;

e. Workmen's compensation benefits and war hazard protection;

f. Repatriation of workers remains and properties in case of death to the point of hire, or if this is not possible under the circumstances, the proper disposition thereof, upon prior arrangement with the worker's next-of-kin and the nearest Embassy or Consulate through the Office of the Labor Attaché;

g. Assistance in the remittance of worker's salaries, allowances or allotments to his beneficiaries; and

h. Free and adequate lodging facilities or compensatory food allowance at prevailing cost of living standards at the jobsite.

As for the expenses incurred in the hiring of Filipino workers, the POEA instructs the principal or employer to pay the cost of POEA service manning fee, airfare, visa fee, and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) membership fee. The job candidate only has to pay the documentation services such as trade or skill testing, medicare, medical examination, passport, police clearance, birth certificate, inoculation, and notarial. Before September 2001, the POEA also allowed local recruitment agencies to collect from their selected/hired workers a placement fee equivalent to one (1) month salary. After 2001, agencies were prohibited from exacting placement fees from workers bound to countries where the laws, customs, or practice prohibit the collection of such fees. Instrumental to this shift in policy were the legal battles that ensued between Irish-based recruitment

agencies and some of their Filipino recruits who sued the former upon learning that exacting placement fees was illegal in Ireland. The Philippine government revised the policy to address this glaring policy conflict.

When migrant workers go through the POEA, they are given an exit clearance in the form of an E-Receipt (electronic receipt) or an Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC) certifying to the regularity of a worker's recruitment and documentation. It also exempts workers from travel tax and airport terminal fee. It is presented at the POEA Labor Assistance Center (LAC) and the Bureau of Immigration (BI) counter at the gateway airports prior to departure. The E-Receipt or OEC serves as the worker's guarantee that he/she is covered by government protection and benefits. Without this clearance, an Overseas Filipino Worker will be barred from leaving the country. This is the State's form of exercising its right to curtail the right to travel in the interest of public safety.

The POEA has a direct hire (a.k.a. name hire) policy where a foreign employer can directly recruit, without working with a local recruitment agency, up to four Filipino workers. Beyond this number, the employer must employ the services of a local recruitment agency to source their workers. This direct hire policy was a bane for well-meaning employers in Ireland looking for professional workers, such as accounting firms. Some accounting firms were looking for trainee accountants and sent headhunters to the Philippines to interview candidates. They were able to bring in a few accountants to Ireland via the direct hire process, but in subsequent hires POEA told them they had to hire the services of a licensed recruitment agency from the Philippines. Instead of working with a local recruitment agency, they decided to forego the recruitment of Filipinos professionals altogether, thereby, eliminating good, quality job opportunities for Filipino professionals, and limiting the number of Filipinos working in Ireland.

POEA's cautiousness in terms of the deployment of workers is understandable given widespread and varied forms of illegal recruitment. Migrant protection clauses are certainly required in certain contexts. There are many reports of scams perpetrated by fly-by-night recruitment firms that ask consumers for advance payment for a job lead or to lock in a job offer and then run off with their money. These job offers are almost always bogus or non-existent. In some cases, a third party is involved, pretending to be an employer in order to make the process convincing and lure unwitting consumers. Even licensed recruitment firms have been reported to overcharge placement fees.

The Irish State and Evolving Legal Framework

As a member of the European Union, Ireland provides EU nationals the right to work and live in Ireland and extends to them "the same rights as Irish nationals with regard to salary, work conditions, access to housing, vocational training, social security, and trade union membership" (McCrudden, 2000:20). Their spouses and qualified dependants are allowed to join them as well. Despite these rights, Irish employers were initially unable to recruit enough skilled, motivated, reliable, English speaking workers from within the EU. Ireland found itself lacking in critical manpower to support its growth and development in the late 90's and the dawn of the 21st century, so it opened its labor market to non-EU/EEA nationals.

For positions to be approved for outsourcing from countries outside the EU, the job openings must be advertised by Irish employers in local newspapers and at the FAS EURES network for a minimum of four weeks. If no (or not enough) Irish or European nationals are found qualified for the position, the employers can apply for work permits for non-EU nationals. Employers have the option to recruit directly or employ the services of a recruitment agency to arrange and organize the recruitment of

workers. The four-week advertising requirement can delay the recruitment of much needed workers, but some occupations, including the nursing profession, are exempted from this requisite.

Having acquired the approval of the DETE for the hiring of non-EU nationals, Irish employers solicit the help of recruitment agencies in Ireland. The employers provide the recruitment agents with a job order, stipulating the type, number, qualifications (skills), and the salary of workers they want. The recruitment agency will relay the information to their partner agencies in the Philippines to look for recruits and send the CVs of applicants to the recruitment agency in Ireland. In most cases the recruitment agency in Ireland already has a ready pool of CVs from which the employers can select. The employer will go over the CVs and select from the list. The employer will then apply for work permits for the selected workers at the DETE. However, most employers prefer to just sign the documents and delegate the legwork of applying for work permits to the recruitment agency. The cost of each work permit was 125 Irish pounds at that time (between €160-170) and takes about 6-8 weeks to process. As soon as the DETE releases the work permits, the recruitment agency sends them immediately to their partner agency in the Philippines who will then contact the workers so they can begin the process of applying for a visa. The Irish consulate in the Philippines sends the visa applications to the Department of Justice in Ireland for processing. It takes another four weeks to process the visa.

For Filipinos to be able to work in Ireland in any capacity they must have a work permit, work visa, or intra-company transfer visa. All nurses and other professionals were issued *work visas*, while those engaged in non-professional occupations were issued *work permits*.

The Work Visa

The work visa scheme was introduced in 2000 to facilitate the recruitment of suitably qualified persons from non-EEA countries in areas such as information and computing technologies, construction, and medical health and social care activities.

In 2000, one of the requirements for nurses to qualify as a Candidate Nurse in Ireland was at least two (2) years general or specialized nursing experience. Proof of English language competence was not a requirement then. Passing the job interview conducted by top Irish nursing officials during the recruitment drive was sufficient proof of English competence. However, on July 1, 2003, the An Bord Altranais began to require Candidate Nurses to show proof of English language competence in verbal and written communication as a minimum requirement to enable the applicant to engage in the nursing practice safely and effectively in Ireland. Applicants whose first language or primary language of expression is not English must achieve an overall band score of 6.5 in the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) academic test with a minimum score of 6.0 in the speaking and writing modules, and 5.5 in the reading and listening modules.

On March 1, 2005, the An Bord Altranais announced the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Test of Written English (TWE), and Test of Spoken English (TSE) as an alternative to IELTS. To qualify as Candidate Nurses, applicants must achieve a total score of 570 and 230 for paper-based TOEFL and computer-based TOEFL, respectively, 5.5 for the TWE and 50 for TSE. Beginning on April 1, 2007 the An Bord Altranais further increased the required overall band score for IELTS to 7.0 with a minimum score of 6.5 in reading and listening, and 7.0 in writing and speaking.

Another requirement for work visa application was a certification from the An Board Altranais (ABA), the Irish Nursing Board, that the applicant had satisfied the

requirements to be a Candidate Nurse. The work visas issued to Candidate nurses are initially good for three months only. During this period, candidate nurses are expected to undergo and pass the period of adaptation and assessment in a training hospital in Ireland before they are enlisted in the Division of the Register at An Bord Altranais. After they are included in the Register, the work visa of the Registered Nurse will be extended to two years, the duration of a work visa, and may then be renewed.

The period of adaptation and assessment is six weeks and a Candidate Nurse has a chance to appeal with the An Bord Altranais if they fail the assessment. If an appeal is granted, the candidate will be given another six weeks of assessment period. During the early stages of the recruitment of non-EEA nurses, the appeals process was non-existent. Filipino nurses who failed the six-week period of adaptation and assessment were advised to go back to the Philippines. An alternative for Filipino nurses was to work as care assistants in Ireland, or go to neighboring Belfast, U.K., which at that time was still actively recruiting nurses. Others sought the help of the Chaplain of the Filipino people in Ireland who was instrumental in the institution of the appeals process. His role is discussed in more detail in chapter seven.

As work visa holders, Filipino nurses are given Stamp 4, a residency visa, in their passports which allows them to freely move between employers within the same sector. They also have rights to family reunification. Their spouses and unmarried children under 18 can reunify with them after three months, but it usually takes a few more months, even years, before the family is partially or fully reunited because of the amount of preparation required, (for example, housing, raising the necessary amount needed for travel and other expenses of the family). In addition, prior to March 2004 migrant spouses had no entitlement to work in Ireland.

The Work Permit

In the year 2000, when hiring a Filipino worker an Irish employer must apply for a work permit at the Work Permit Section of the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment (DETE). An employer must be able to demonstrate that s/he needs the worker and that no Irish or EEA citizen is available to do the work. Being a member of the European Union, the policy of the Irish State was to source as much of their labor and skill requirements from within the EEA. The DETE would only issue work permits for skills that were in short supply in the EEA.

Starting January 2002, the DETE instituted a policy that required Irish employers seeking non-EEA nationals to first advertise the job for four weeks with the FAS, the National Employment and Training Authority in Ireland. If the period passes and no Irish or EEA national had applied for the job, the employer may apply for a work permit at the DETE with accompanying certification from FAS. Work permits cost €500 Euros and were valid for 6-12 months.

Work permits are Stamp 1 and granted to the employer, not to the worker. Once a work permit is issued, which is good for a year and renewable depending on the employer, the worker can only work for that particular employer and no one else. The worker is thus contractually tied to the employer, and cannot transfer to other employers within the same sector. Critics described this as a form of slavery because workers cannot move to another employer. This leaves them vulnerable and open to exploitation. Though work permit holders have the right to reside in Ireland, they do not have the right to free medical care, social welfare entitlements, and free education. In addition, a work permit has no provision for family reunification within the first year. After a year they may apply for family reunification, provided that (1) the worker's permit has been renewed for at least another year and (2) he/she must have the necessary resources to support family members without recourse to public funds.

An EU directive on family reunification made it possible for workers to qualify for family reunification upon renewal of the work permit. However, lack of entitlement to work of spouses of non-EEA nationals prior to March 2004 prevented many from bringing their spouses and children to Ireland.

On April 10, 2003, in anticipation of the signing of the EU Accession Treaty six days later, Ireland enacted the Employment Permits Act of 2003 granting workers from the 10 EU Accession States[11] free access to the Irish labor market upon EU enlargement on May 1, 2004. In preparation for the expansion of the EU, Ireland began preferring Accession state nationals for available jobs in Ireland over other nationalities. Even though EU expansion was still a year away, sponsorship applications hiring non-EEA nationals lodged by employers at the DETE were returned if the needed workers could be sourced in the EU. Employers were also made aware of this preferential policy in the hiring of Accession State nationals. By December 2003 the following occupations became ineligible for non-EEA nationals[12]:

- Clerical and Administrative
- General Laborers and Builders
- Operator and Production Staff

- Sales Staff
  - Including retail sales, sales representatives and Management/Supervisory/ Specialist Sales
- Transport Staff
  - Including Drivers - Bus, Coach, Car, Taxi, Fork Lift, etc.
  - (Excluding HGV and Articulated vehicle driver - International)
- Childcare Workers
  - Including Nursery/ Crèche Workers, Child Minder/ Nanny
- Hotel Tourism and Catering

[11] The Accession countries are Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Malta & Cyprus. As of 1st May 2004 Accession State Nationals no longer require work permits to work in Ireland, but they still need to register with the local Garda station for a residency permit like every other EU citizen.

[12] DETE (2003). "Tánaiste Announces Changes in Work Permit Eligibility." http://www.entemp.ie/press/2003/010803a.htm. Accessed March 16, 2010.

- Reception staff and Barpersons
- Craft Workers and Apprentice/Trainee Craft Workers
  - Including Bookbinder, Bricklayer, Cabinet Maker, Carpenter / Joiner, Carton Maker, Fitter - Construction Plant, Electrician, Instrumentation Craftsperson, Fitter, Tiler - Floor/ Wall, Mechanic - Heavy Vehicles, Instrumentation Craftsperson, Metal Fabricator, Mechanic - Motor, Originator, Painter And Decorator, Plumber, Printer, Engineer - Refrigeration, Sheet Metal Worker, Tool Maker, Vehicle Body Repairer, Machinist - Wood
  - (Excluding Plasterers and Aircraft Mechanic/Engineer)

The Accession State preference had the effect of gradually closing doors for Filipinos seeking jobs in non-professional occupations in Ireland. Even Filipinos already in Ireland on work permits found themselves unable to transfer to new employers who were willing to sponsor their new work permits because occupations that had been open to them had been included in the "ineligible occupations list." Occupations that were still in short supply in Ireland, however, were eligible for "fast-track visas." Under this scheme, jobs in healthcare (nurses), construction (architects, planners and engineers), information technology, and research and development (R&D), were exempted from the labor market needs test, and therefore employers could continue to source them from outside the EEA. The fast-track work visas were designed to encourage these professionals to come to Ireland and retain their services to ease the bottlenecks in the Irish labor market.

Since many work permit holders at the time of pronouncement were spouses of Filipino nurses, the prospects of those who wished to change employers grew dim and their only choice to stay employed was to work with the same employer. Thus, they were more open to exploitation than ever. Dependant spouses of nurses who were still unemployed were demoralized because of dwindling job prospects. As a result, in 2003 and early 2004 about 900 nurses and their families left Ireland for more family friendly countries. The mass exodus of nurses proved costly to the Irish health service

in terms of lost investments (recruitment and training) and threatened the quality of health service delivery in Ireland.[13]

In February 2004, the Tánaiste, Ms. Harney, announced a policy reversal. Spouses of professionals from outside the EU working in healthcare (nurses), construction (architects, planners and engineers), IT workers, and research and development (R&D), who were employed under fast-track "work visas" in Ireland were given automatic work permits free of charge starting in March of 2004. The biggest beneficiaries of this scheme were over 4,000 Filipino nurses employed in Irish hospitals. This was the result of an intense lobby started in 2003 by the Irish Nurses' Organization (INO) and the Association of Directors of Nursing and Midwifery to change the policy and provide spouses of nurses automatic right to work, to retain the nurses.

However, in a media release by the Immigrant Council of Ireland, the move, though welcomed, was labeled as discriminatory because it did not extend to all work permit holders. On July 18, 2004 Sr. Stanislaus Kennedy, the Executive Director of the Immigrant Council of Ireland released a statement saying:

> "This was a welcome move. But what is good for some should be good for all. The contribution of people here on work permits and their spouses should be valued just as much as those on visas for what are termed 'higher skilled' positions. The current discrimination isolates and marginalizes families who most often have to try and survive on just one income."[14]

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[13] Adding to the exodus of nurses is the tenure policy in the nurses' place of employment. Some employers took time to decide to give permanency status to the recruited nurses. Due to the uncertainty of their job status, with visas and initial contracts only good for two years, many nurses sought and applied for jobs outside of Ireland. By the time the employers came up with the decision to give them permanency or renew their contract, hundreds had already accepted offers to work outside of Ireland upon the expiration of their contracts.

[14] Immigrant Council of Ireland (2004) "The State Criticized for Anti-Family Policies by the Immigrant Council of Ireland" Media Release: 18th July 2004 http://www.immigrantcouncil.ie/prfam.htm -- Date accessed October 25, 2007

The implementation of the policy was also criticized because, while spouses were allowed to work and the permit was issued free of charge, their work permits were still tied to only one employer and, therefore, they could not engage in additional part-time jobs. Moreover, many Irish employers were unaware of the change in policy. The poor dissemination of information regarding this policy change led employers to maintain the status quo of prioritizing EU workers, thus, many spouses of nurses still ended up the last priority, despite being qualified for the job.

On February 1, 2007 changes to the spousal/dependant work permits stipulated in the Employment Permits Act of 2006 came into effect. Spouses and dependants of employment permit holders were permitted to apply for work permits for any occupation and were exempted from the labor market needs test. In addition, the employer or the employee may apply for the work permit. The work permit is granted to the employee, not the employer, but the employer gets a copy. The permit also indicates the rights and entitlements of the employee. An added advantage is that the work permits are free of charge.

The expiration of the spousal/dependant work permit, however, is tied to the work permit or visa of the principal i.e. if a nurse's visa expires, so does the spousal/dependant work permit of her spouse. There have been isolated reports of principals threatening not to renew the work permits of their spouses in order to keep them in line.

In terms of family reunification, prior to February 2007, work permit holders were allowed to reunite with their families after a year in Ireland, but on the condition that the worker was still working within the terms of his/her work permit. Typically, however, the low income of work permit holders has often been insufficient to meet the family reunification income requirements of the Irish State and, therefore, they could not bring their families. In February 2007, Ireland relaxed the family income

requirements for work permit holders who had worked in Ireland for more than three years. This enabled many work permit holders to bring their families to Ireland.

The Green Card

On February 1, 2007, Ireland replaced the work visas with the Green Card (GC) permit. It is a permit for most occupations with salaries greater than €60,000 or certain occupations where there are skill shortages with annual salaries ranging from €30,000 – €60,000 like nursing. Labor market needs tests are not required for occupations falling under this scheme.

Green Cards are initially issued for two years after which holders may apply for long-term residency. At first issue, a Green Card Permit costs €1,000, and renewal after two years with an indefinite duration costs €1,500. Work visa holders who arrived in Ireland before February 1, 2007 decried the new scheme because they found it unfair given that they had to wait 5 years to be eligible for long-term residency (discussed in the next section), while the GC holders could acquire it in just two years. They reckoned that the high renewal fee for the GC must be the buying rate to acquire long-term residency.

Spouses and unmarried children under 18 of Green Card permit holders could immediately join them in Ireland, unlike in the previous work visa scheme in which the sponsor (work visa holder) had to wait three months before they could start the application process of bringing their families. Spouses/dependants of Green Card holders are also allowed to apply for work permits at zero cost for any job vacancy without the requirement of a labor market needs test provided that they qualify for the job.

Unlike its work visa predecessor, Green Card permits, which took effect in 2007, are Stamp 1 (work permit). These tie workers to their employers for at least one

year, after which they are allowed to change employer, provided a new application for Green Card permit is made. When they secure an indefinite Green Card permit after 2 years in Ireland, they can change employment at any time. However, the economic realities in Ireland have changed, and so have the state's promise to Green Card permit holders. In 2009, Green Card holders, who were already in Ireland for two years, found themselves being given only one year residency visa (Stamp 4), renewable every year, instead of the long-term residency visa embodied in the 2007 pronouncement.

Since Green Cards are stamp 1 (work permits), Green Card holders are at a relative disadvantage compared to their work visa counterparts. This is because they cannot do agency work, since they are not allowed to work for two or more employers. They also cannot do job-share or work part-time. And they have less chance of getting their personal/car loans or mortgaged applications approved because lenders prefer those with work visas (residence visa), since they have greater mobility within the labor market in case they suffer a loss of employment.

Long-term Residency

Long-term residency is granted when a non-EEA national has completed five years (60 months) of legal residence in Ireland on work permit/visa conditions, which is reflected in the Stamp 1 (work permit) or Stamp 4 (work visa) endorsements in their passport. Once granted long-term residency, previous work permit holders with Stamp 1 in their passports will be upgraded to Stamp 4.

The Stamp 4 grants those who qualify for long-term residency the right to live and work or start a business in Ireland for five years without a work permit requirement. It also allows them to move freely between employers and different sectors on the job market. At the end of five years, they may apply to have their status

renewed. A Stamp 4 is a ticket to access resources such as applying for a mortgage or advancing one's education and training. Banks do not normally approve mortgage applications of work permit holders because they are not permanent residents, are tied to an employer, and can not easily change employers or get a new work permit.

Naturalization

Like long-term residency, naturalization is granted when a non-EEA national has completed five years (60 months) of legal residence in Ireland on work permit/visa conditions. Initially, the similarity in terms of reckonable years' requirement between long-term residency and naturalization was a cause of confusion among applicants because they were uncertain whether to apply first as long-term resident or skip it directly and go for naturalization, or to do both simultaneously. It turns out that they can lodge the two applications at the same time, or just skip long-term residency entirely and go straight to naturalization.

Many Filipino nurses had been in Ireland since 2000, yet it took more than 8 years before a nurse was granted citizenship by virtue of being a nurse working in Ireland, and not by virtue of being married to an Irish national. The long wait to citizenship and the growing impatience among the Filipinos in Ireland was headlined "Give Us Citizenship!" in the May-June-July 2008 issue of the *Filipino Forum,* the Filipino ethnic newspaper in Ireland.

Filipinos aspire for citizenship more than long-term residency because as Irish citizens then can freely travel within the EU and can vote in national and EU elections, on top of all the rights and privileges that long-term residents enjoy.

Residency by virtue of having an Irish-born child

Prior to January 1, 2005, any child born in Ireland was an Irish citizen and non-EEA parents of Irish-born children (IBC) were given automatic residency in the country. This encouraged some Filipino couples, especially during the period when their spouses lacked the entitlement to work, to add another child so they could both gain residency by virtue of an IBC, and accordingly to secure the benefits associated with it. Parents granted residency rights by virtue of an IBC are issued Stamp 4 which means that they have right to live and work, or start a business in Ireland.

Article 2 of the Irish Constitution, which was amended in the 1998 referendum on the Belfast Agreement, grants Irish citizenship based on the principle of *jus soli* to those born in the Island of Ireland, including its islands and seas. Parents of these Irish born children may remain in Ireland by virtue of the 1989 Fajujonu decision of the Supreme Court which ruled that non-Irish parents of an Irish child may remain in Ireland because the child has the right to the "care, company and parentage" of its parents. In 2004, the Irish State initiated a call for citizenship referendum because the Constitution was being abused by asylum seekers and "citizenship tourists" who went to Ireland to give birth, acquire citizenship for their child, and request a leave to remain by invoking the Fajujonu decision.

On June 11, 2004, a Citizenship Referendum was held to determine whether Irish citizens approved of the proposal to amend the Constitution contained in the 27th Amendment of the Constitution Bill 2004. The referendum stipulated:

> "Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution, a person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, who does not have, at the time of the birth of that person, at least one parent who is an Irish citizen or entitled to be an Irish citizen is not entitled to Irish citizenship or nationality, unless provided for by law."
>
> "This section shall not apply to persons born before the date of the enactment of this section."

The referendum had a very high voter turnout of about 60 percent, of which 4 out of 5 (79.7 percent) voted for the amendment. The referendum also reinstated the power of the legislature to pass laws pertaining to Irish citizenship.

On December 2004, the legislature exercised the mandate they received in the June 2004 referendum and passed the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act of 2004 which granted Irish citizenship to:

1. a child born in Ireland to at least one Irish parent
2. a child born in Ireland on or after January 1, 2005 to non-national parents provided at least one of them have been legally resident in the island of Ireland for three of the four years immediately preceding the birth of the child.

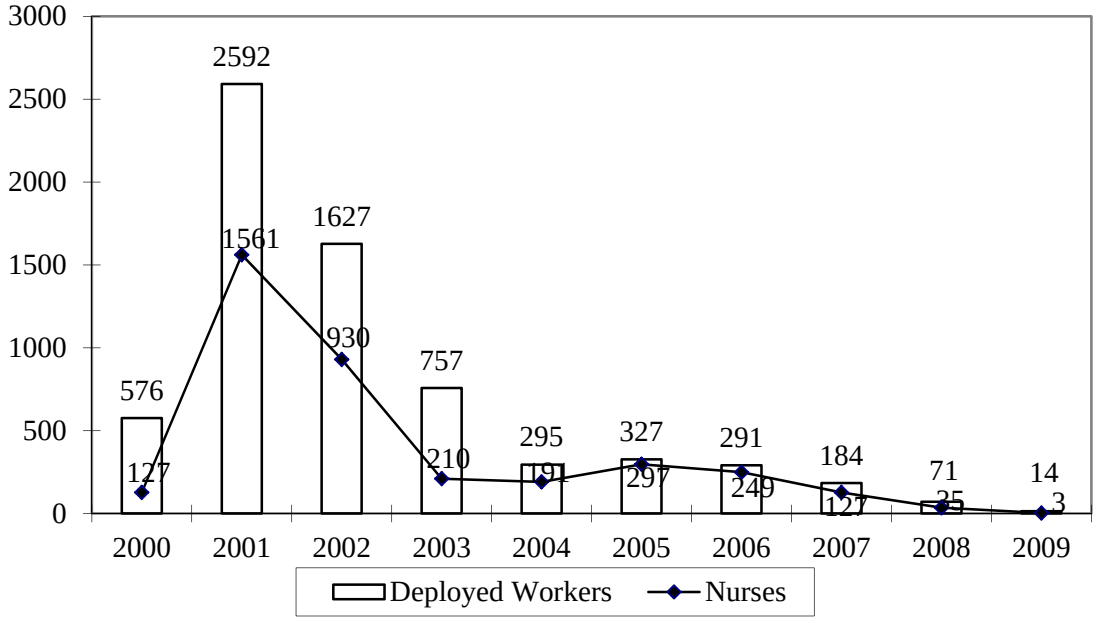
The League of Filipino Nurses in Ireland described the referendum "an 'insult to the people who are keeping the Irish health services running'; 'it would take away the rights of children born to nurses, who have come to Ireland in good faith to work, live and bring up their families here'; and 'it is about a blanket denial of rights to children of families like us nurses'" (Byrne, 2004)[15].

The rise and decline of Filipino nurse deployment to Ireland

Figure 4.7 shows the trend in deployment of Filipino nurses to Ireland. June 2000 marked the beginning of deployment of Filipino nurses to Ireland. Among other reasons that encouraged them to migrate to Ireland were the very few requirements to practice their profession– only two years general or specialized nursing experience, passing an interview, and passing a six-week period of assessment. Recruitment declined in 2002 because the Philippines was running out of qualified nurses, as it was

[15] Byrne, Nicola (2004). "'Racist' vote on birthrights splits Ireland" *Scotland on Sunday.* Sun 13 Jun 2004.

also sending nurses to Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Canada, United States, Norway, and 55 other countries. The outmigration of Filipino nurses in early 2000 had severe negative consequences on the Philippines' health care system. It contributed to the fast turnover and severe understaffing in Philippine hospitals, and left Filipino patients under the care of new, often inexperienced, incompetent and uncommitted nurses. In addition, the health care system was losing its interns, specialists, and resident doctors because they were retraining as nurses.



Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)

Figure 4.7 Trend of OFW deployment to Ireland from 2000-2009.

Filipino nurse deployment further declined in 2003 in part because of Ireland's ethical recruitment of nurses' policy, wherein they expanded their list of source countries for nurses to ensure that their recruitment drives did not jeopardize the health care industry of the source nations. One of the countries they sourced their nurses from was India. Filipino nurse deployment also declined because of the introduction

of the proof of English language competence – the International English Language Testing Service (IELTS). As Ireland's source countries for nurses grew, she became more selective and increased her standards. On July 1, 2003, the state started requiring candidate nurses to take the IELTS and gain an overall band score of at least 6.5. The cut-off was moved up to 7.0 starting on April 1, 2007. This cut-off figure is stringent. In 2008, only a-third of the examinees who took the exam for nursing registration purposes were able to achieve the overall band score of 7.0. Had they retained it to the previous level of 6.5, three-fifths (58 percent) would have achieved the cut-off score. Given this statistics, the IELTS requirement alone had effectively weeded out two of three potential nurse-migrants.

All the recruiters I interviewed were consistent in saying that Filipinos had difficulty attaining the cut-off score. According to them, Indian nationals had less difficulty than Filipinos in achieving the required overall band score. However, as shown in Table 4.1, the recruiters' observations were incorrect. Filipinos consistently outperformed Indian nationals in all components of the IELTS. In addition, in 2009, half (50 percent) of the Filipinos who took the IELTS had an overall band score of 7 or more, while only 19 percent of Indians recorded those numbers. One possible explanation for the recruiters perception that Indians were out-performing Filipinos is that the pool of Indian nurses who achieved the cut-off score was substantially higher (in absolute numbers) than the Filipinos because of the sheer size of their population.

In 2005, a slight uptick in Filipino nurse deployment was observed. This was brought about by renewed vigor in recruitment because Ireland did not produce a single nurse that year. In Academic Year 2002-2003, Ireland changed their nursing curriculum from a three-year Diploma course to a four-year BSN degree, and this led to a no-graduates scenario in 2005. This change in curriculum was triggered by competition within the Irish health care system as Irish nurses seemed, at least on

paper, to have lower qualifications than foreign-born nurses. This perception arose because of their diploma degrees which did not compare favorably to the BSN degrees of nurses who had been educated elsewhere.

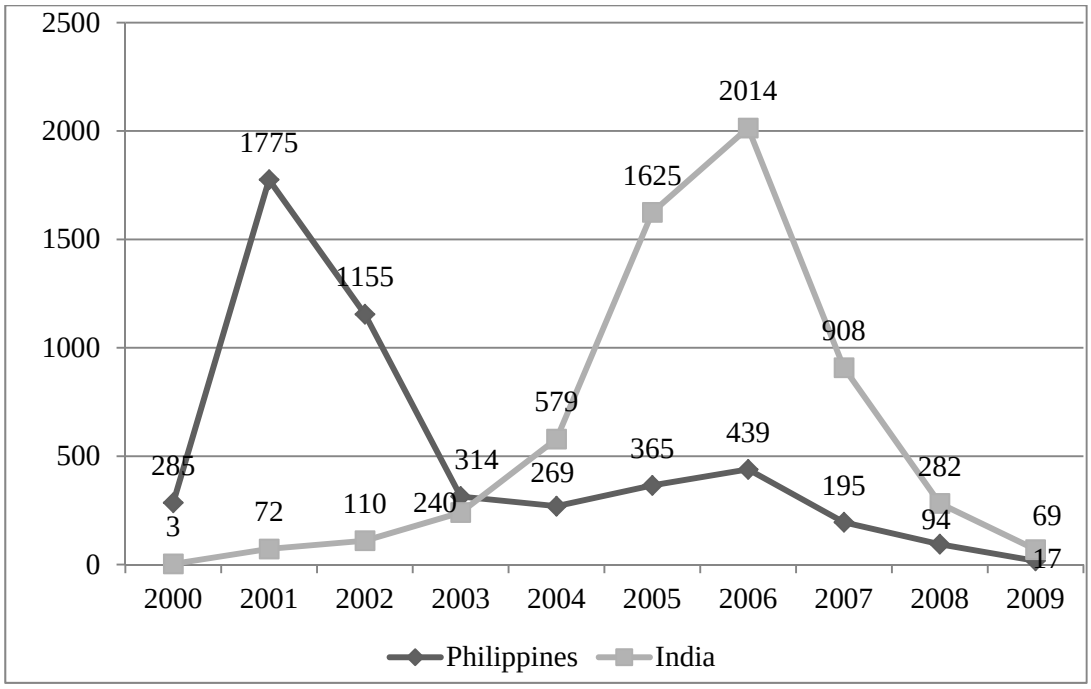
Table 4.1 Mean band score of Test-Takers from the Philippines and India (Academic Training)

		Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall
2006	Philippines	6.68	6.27	6.18	6.74	6.53
	India	6.30	5.82	5.79	6.10	6.07
2007	Philippines	6.75	6.36	6.17	6.76	6.58
	India	6.19	5.72	5.62	5.93	5.97
2008	Philippines	6.94	6.51	6.25	6.81	6.69
	India	6.04	5.58	5.51	5.77	5.79
2009	Philippines	7.05	6.60	6.21	6.81	6.73
	India	6.01	5.54	5.46	5.72	5.75

Source: IELTS Test-Taker Performance 2006-2009
Note: IELTS has two test formats -- Academic and General Training. Academic is typically for those who want to study or train in an English-speaking university, while General Training is typically for those who are going to English-speaking countries for work experience or training programs. However, certain professions require an Academic test result for registration rather than General Training. One such profession is nursing in Ireland.

After 2005, Filipino nurse deployment to Ireland started to plummet. In 2008, only 35 nurses were deployed by the Philippines to Ireland. By 2009, only three were recorded. Ireland's cuts in public health spending due to the recession and their expanding international markets for nurses explain the drop. In addition, the few vacancies that were created due to turnovers were likely filled up with new hires from India. They are less expensive to hire and Ireland was satisified with their job

performance. Figure 4.8 shows the disproportionate number of new hires from India and the Philippines in the last 6 years and decline in nurse recruitment starting in 2007 due to the recession.



Source: An Bord Altranais.

Figure 4.8. Filipino and Indian New Registrants by Year First Registered: 2000-2009

Although Filipino nurses were out-performing Indian nurses in the IELTS, disproportionate numbers of nurses were being recruited from India. By 2004, Indian nationals had overtaken Filipinos among new nurse registrants in the Nursing Division Register, and have since become the majority of non-EEA nursing professionals in Ireland. The dominance of Indian nurses has been due to their three distinct advantages over Filipinos: a) more of them in absolute terms achieved the minimum IELTS band score because of the size of their pool of nurses; b) India is geographically closer to Ireland than is the Philippines, which means lower cost to transport migrants; and c) the BSN curriculum in India meets the direct registration

requirements of the An Bord Altranais, which means they are not required to undertake the six-week period of assessment. This translates to substantial savings to the employer because they do not have to pay for the assessment and the nurses can start working for them immediately upon arrival in Ireland.

Summary and Discussion:

The Philippine State

The Philippines has an agency and policies in place to protect its workers from illegal recruitment and exploitative working conditions such as sub-standard pay and benefits packages. As a result, however, well-meaning international employers who would have been willing to provide employment to Filipino workers if they would pay their own way to get to Ireland, could not legally hire them. In some cases, foreign employers were willing to abide by the standard contract and hire numerous workers, but they were being told to partner with a local recruitment agency if they wanted to hire five or more workers. The standard contracts and policy of partnering with local agencies limited the number of Filipinos who could have obtained real and safe jobs in Ireland. The Philippine state is caught in a situation where it has to balance worker protection with genuine and safe offers that do not fully comply with state regulations. The strict implementation of Philippine state policies helped shape the development of this emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system by limiting the number of migrant workers that form the base from which this system can grow.

While some of the policies of the Philippine government served to limit the number of workers to Ireland, the government has helped lower the cost of migrating by revising its policy on placement fees. The Philippine government has also resolved the conflicting policies on placement fee collection where it is legal (in the Philippines) and where it is not (in Ireland) by embracing Ireland's no placement fee

charging policy and expanding the same to countries with similar policies as Ireland. Under the revised policy, no placement fees will be assessed to workers bound for countries where the practice of assessing placement fees is illegal. This change may have helped increase the number of Filipinos working in Ireland by making it more attractive and affordable.

The POEA has a Marketing Branch that monitors the labor markets of the world and makes recommendations for policies specific to that labor market (Rodriguez, 2010). Clearly, this department contributed to the placement fee policy change implemented in 2001. However, there is still that unmet need that must be addressed between willing, but not completely compliant, employers, and job candidates who are willing to pay for the travel expenses to land the job.

The Irish State

In 1999, the Irish State opened their labor market to non-EEA nationals. This triggered a mass migration of Filipinos in both low-skilled and high-skilled occupations. Numbers increased from a stock of 257 Filipinos prior to 2000 to nearly 2,000 by the end of 2001. This high number in 2001 was, in part, the result of a lack of bilateral agreement between Ireland and the Philippines, that allowed for the continuous entry of documented and undocumented (from the perspective of the Philippine state) Filipino workers.

The rise in number of Filipinos in Ireland would have been much higher during the early years of this emerging system if it were not for the discriminatory family reunification policy of Ireland. This family reunification policy favored professional occupations over the lower rung occupations. Duration of work and income were the main requirements for family reunification. While income requirements were equally applied to all types of workers, requirements according to duration of work were not.

Work visa holders could start the process of inviting their families for reunification after three months, while work permit holders could reunite after one year of working in Ireland. With their higher incomes, work visa holders (such as nurses) have been able to reunite their families much sooner than have low-skilled workers. Low-skilled workers had to wait until the state changed its policy in 2007 (waiving the income requirements for those who had worked in Ireland for more than 36 months) before they could reunite their families. This significantly influenced the timing of migration of family members and the type of families that first reunited in Ireland i.e., mostly families of professional workers. The long delay in reunification brought about by protracted action of the Irish State on the needs of families of migrant workers contributed to the slow pace of family reunification within the first seven years of this emerging system.

Although families of professional nurses have the capacity to reunite in Ireland, family reunification was unattractive during the first four years (2000-2003) of the system. Spouses were not given the right to work, forcing them into completely dependency on their nurse spouses. The spouse's lack of entitlement to work was *partly* responsible for the departure of an estimated 900 nurses in 2003. Emphasis is given to the word *partly* because one other important factor leading to their departure from Ireland that was not reported in any form of media, but that was cited by nurses in the interviews, was job security. The initial contracts of nurses were only good for two years and they were uncertain whether or not their employers would renew their contracts. Many of the 1,500 nurses who arrived in 2001 had contracts that were set to expire in 2003. In anticipation of their contract expiration, they applied for and secured jobs in other countries. They left as soon as their contracts expired.

The mass exodus of nurses from Ireland in 2003 proved costly to the employers and the Irish health care system. As a result, many employers offered

permanent employment status to Filipino nurses instead of hiring and retraining new recruits. This is significant because this gave them job security, which is important for living permanently in Ireland. For its part, the Irish State reversed itself in March 2004 and permitted the spouses of non-EEA professional workers to work. This led to increases in migration of spouses to Ireland and eventual reunification of entire families of nurses. Migrant rights advocates decried the policy, however, because it only applied to spouses of professional workers. Spouses of those in non-professional occupations (work permit holders) were left out. It took almost three (3) years before Ireland permitted spouses of work permit holders to work in any occupation without the need for a labor market needs test. In all, work permit holders who arrived in Ireland in 2000 had to wait nearly seven years before their spouses were permitted to work and their families could be reunited.

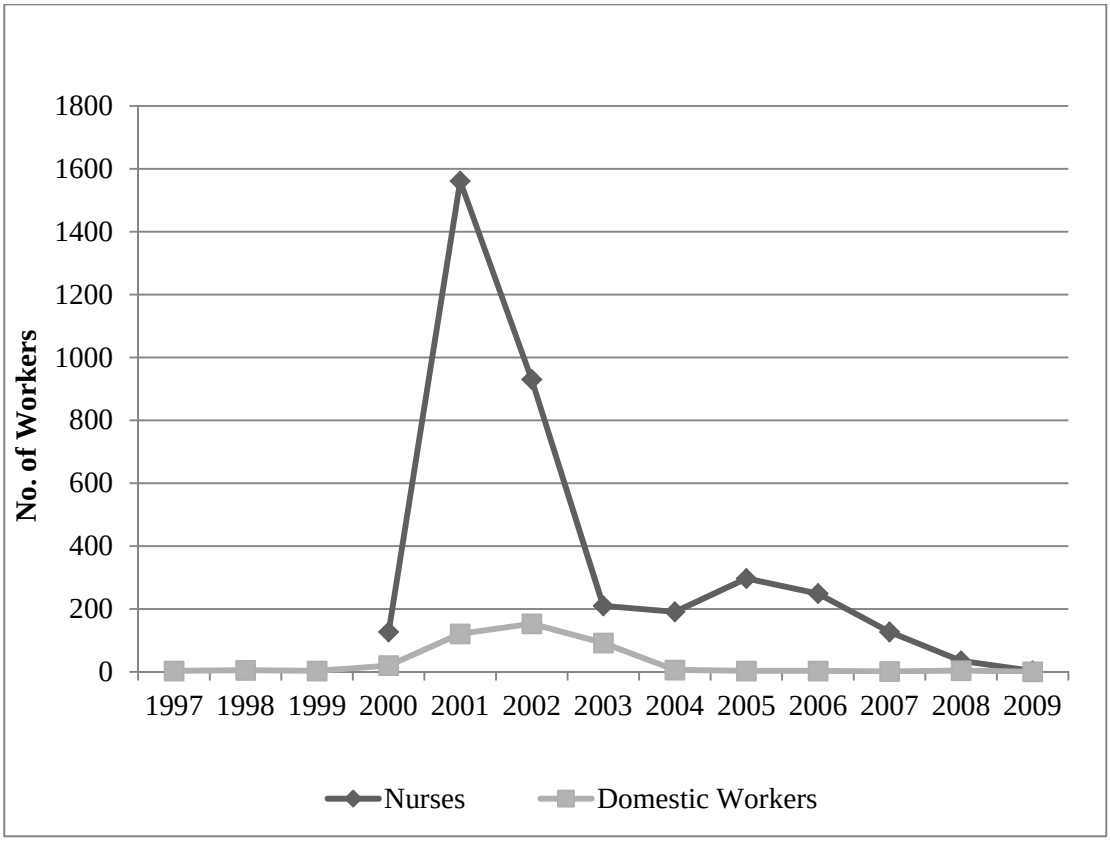
Ireland grants long-term residency status, naturalization, and citizenship that ensures long-term and even lifetime residency to many of the Filipinos in Ireland. In order to be eligible for long-term residency and/or naturalization, the migrant worker must have worked in Ireland for at least five years. The acquisition of Irish citizenship, however, has been complicated because some asylum seekers and citizenship tourists abused the system. Children born before January 1, 2005 are Irish citizens and their parents automatically are given long-term residency status. Children born on or after January 1, 2005 can only become citizens if at least one of their non-EU/EEA parents had worked in Ireland for at least three out of four years prior to the date of birth. Parents have also been stripped of automatic residency rights that were previously ensured by virtue of having an Irish-born child.

Trends and patterns of Filipino migration to Ireland

The effect of the conditions and policies at both the origin and destination countries cited above in shaping the migration system are shown in Figure 4.1, which shows the trend of Overseas Filipino Workers deployment to Ireland from 2000-2009. Each bar represents the total number of workers deployed for the year (N outside bar), and the line represents the number of nurses deployed for the year (N inside bar). One caveat of the POEA data is that it only captures the deployment of workers that were processed by the POEA. Workers who left the Philippines via the back door are not included in the official statistics. The POEA data also does not capture family members of migrant workers who reunited with the migrants in the host country.

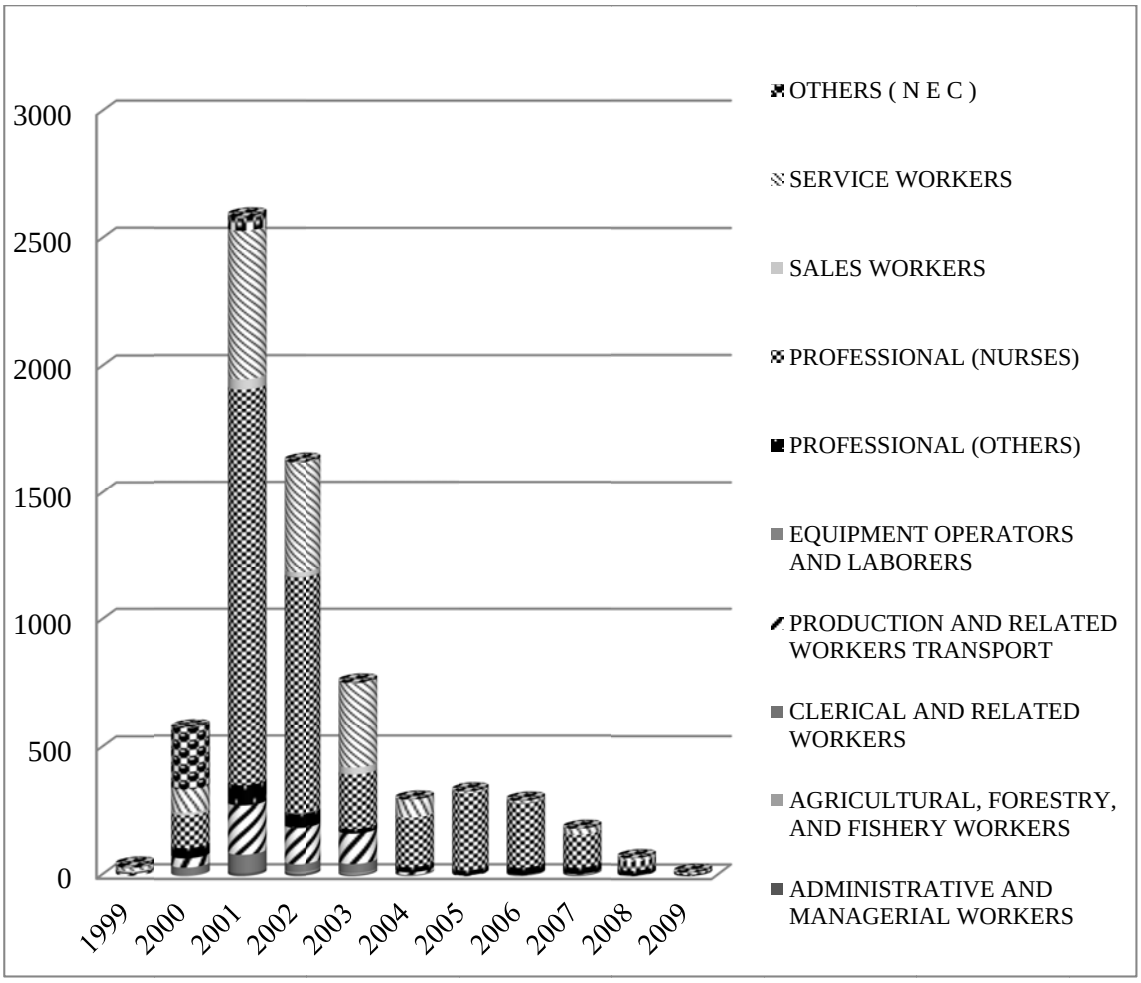
One exceptional character of the migration of Filipinos to Ireland was Ireland's initial openness to *both* low and high skilled Filipino workers. From 2000 to 2003, Filipinos in low skilled occupations were deployed along with high skilled workers, but opportunities for low skilled occupations were gradually closed to Filipinos beginning in 2003. At that point, Ireland began to shift its hiring preference toward Accession states nationals who were to become EU nationals on May 1, 2004. Ireland is one of three countries, along with the United Kingdom and Sweden that allowed full access to its labor market upon accession of the EU 10 on May 1, 2004. After that, opportunities for low-skilled work in Ireland were virtually eliminated for Filipinos, except for spouses of Filipino professionals who had been given entitlement to work in March of 2004. As the occupational structure open to non-EEA nationals narrowed, the size and composition of the stream of migrant workers became more concentrated on nurses and other professionals. Nurses became nearly the only type of worker deployed by the Philippines to Ireland. The impact of the policy is evident in Figure 4.9, which compares the deployment levels to Ireland of Filipino nurses and domestic workers (an example of low skilled occupation), and in Figure 4.10, which

shows the major occupational categories of workers deployed to Ireland. Figure 4.9 shows that since 2004 hardly any Filipino domestic workers have been hired in Ireland and Figure 4.10 shows a clear shift in occupational structure starting in 2004 toward deployment of mostly professional workers (checkered and black patterns).



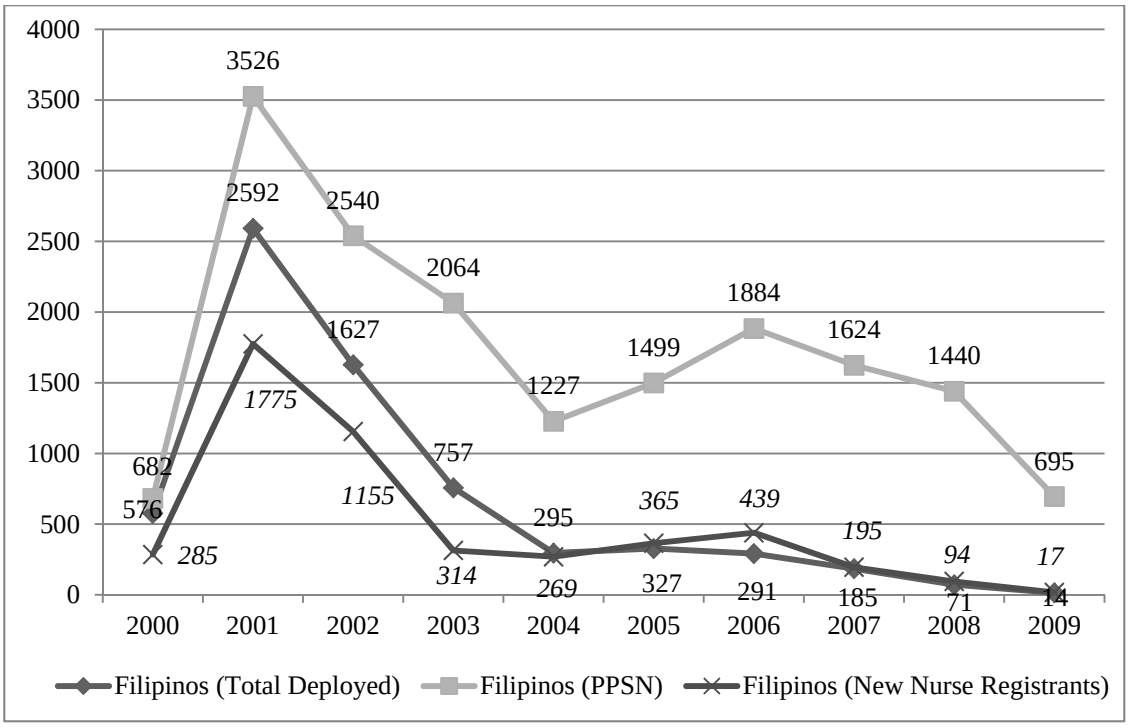
Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)

Figure 4.9. Deployment of Nurses and Domestic Workers in Ireland 1997-2009



Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)

Figure 4.10 Major Occupational Categories of Filipinos Deployed to Ireland



Note: Figures for New Nurse Registrants in italics
Sources: Personal Public Service (PPS) number: Department of Social Protection – Ireland
Total Deployed - Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)
New Nurse Registrants – An Bord Altranais (ABA)

Figure 4.11. Trend of Overseas Filipino Workers Deployment to Ireland and Issuance of New Personal Public Service (PPS) number in Ireland from 2000-2009.

Figure 4.11 shows the trend of Overseas Filipino Workers deployment to Ireland, new Filipino nurse registrants in Ireland, and the issuance of new Personal Public Service (PPS) number in Ireland from 2000-2009. The Personal Public Service (PPS) number is the new name for the Revenue and Social Insurance (RSI) number. It is a unique reference number that helps the bearer gain access to social welfare benefits, public services and information in Ireland. Once a PPS number is allocated it remains unchanged. Every individual, including children have PPS numbers. Children born in the Republic of Ireland are now automatically allocated PPS numbers within three months of the date on which the birth is registered with the General Registrar's Office (GRO). State agencies that use PPS numbers to identify

individuals include the Department of Social and Family Affairs, the Revenue Commissioners and the Health Services Executive (HSE) Areas.

Every Filipino in Ireland would like to have a PPS number because it gives them and their children access to the social welfare benefits and services Ireland has to offer. This data, therefore, probably provide a fairly good estimate of the number of Filipinos who have ever lived in Ireland, with the exception of tourists or visitors who overstayed.

Figure 4.11 reveals that the original cause of migration, which is Ireland's need for workers, has been taken over by family reunification as the gap between workers deployed and new nurse registrants vis-à-vis those with PPS numbers has widened over the years. Although the deployment data of the POEA is underestimated[17], the new nurse registrants data from An Bord Altanais is not. Since nurses dominated much of the workers deployed by the Philippines since 2004, the gap seen between the new nurse registrants and the new PPS numbers issued clearly indicates that cumulative causation through family networks has taken its roots. The declining PPS number trend since 2006, however, seems to indicate that family reunification is running its course i.e., most eligible-to-reunite family members have already joined the workers in Ireland.

Family reunification is the main factor growing the Philippines-Ireland migration system nowadays, as Filipino nurse recruitment has slowed down due to the recession and competition from other countries supplying nurses to Ireland. One side effect of family reunification has been the natural increase in the number of Filipinos.

[17] The deployment data from the POEA reflects the annual number of OFWs bound for Ireland that were processed by the POEA. The fact that since 2005, annually, there were more Filipino nurses registering with An BordAltranais for the first time than total number of OFWs deployed, indicates that the POEA data is underestimated. The POEA data does not capture workers who left the country undocumented, relatives who reunited with the migrants and found jobs in Ireland, and those who were recruited in a third country.

There is no estimate as to the number of children born to Filipino parents in Ireland, but a baby boom was observed by my respondents soon after the lifting of the income requirements for reunification and the subsequent wave of spousal reunification. This baby boom prompted a Pastor of the first Filipino Christian Church in Ireland to present a sermon entitled “The Pregnant Church” (discussed in Chapter 7).

Chapter 5

Getting to Ireland: The Evolution and Roles of the Migration Industry and Social Networks

Recruitment agencies are instrumental in bringing migrant workers to their host countries and they play a very important role in shaping migration systems, but rarely are their evolution and recruitment strategies studied. In the recruitment of workers for Ireland, three types of recruiters stood out – reputable Irish-based recruitment agencies, recruiters for Irish nursing homes, and the "transformers."

Reputable Irish-based recruitment agencies have long been in the business of recruiting nurses, but historically they tended to deploy Irish nurses to other parts of the world, such as the Middle-East. In 2000, they were new to recruiting nurses to Ireland and their lack of experience in recruiting Filipino nurses provides an illustration. One Irish-based agency sought the help of their client hospital in the Middle-East to gain an introduction to a Filipino recruiter who also had that hospital for a client. The introduction led to a long-lasting partnership between these two agencies in the recruitment of Filipino nurses to Ireland. However, Irish-based agencies did not focus their recruitment of Filipino nurses in the Philippines only. They also recruited Filipino nurses in other parts of the world such as Singapore, and various countries in the Middle-East. Thus, agencies created different channels for migration. At present, their internal recruitment is at a standstill because of the economic recession, but is expected to resume once the economic climate improves.

Initially, the recruiters for Irish nursing homes knew of no one in the Philippine with whom they could work to help in the recruitment of nurses. When they finally enlisted the assistance of an Irish priest who was able to verify their organization's authenticity, it started the process that led to widespread migration of Filipino nurses and caregivers. The person they first contacted, a former high ranking

nursing school official who was in the process of establishing a new nursing school, recruited her faculty colleagues and students and word spread quickly. This formed another channel of migration which linked her town to Ireland. One of the largest hometown associations in Ireland with at least 250 members was formed by the migrants from her hometown.

What I call “transformers” are migrant Filipino workers or Filipino spouses of Irish nationals turned recruiters. They were all pioneers, arriving in Ireland at least 7 years before the mass arrival of OFWs. In 2000, they saw the need for workers in Ireland and decided to put up an agency to recruit Filipino workers. They recruited mostly for the service and entertainment industry. The “transformers” clearly embody the role of migrants as bridgeheads, especially for their relatives. However, they also acted as gatekeepers for others. They focused their recruitment in their hometowns and on those who could afford to pay. Thus, they were responsible for the channeling and selectivity of migration and started a chain that linked their hometowns to Ireland. At least 600 low-skilled Filipino workers who arrived in Ireland in 2000 and 2001 came from just two towns in the Philippines. The recruiters described the extent of their hometown recruitment as nearly saturating everyone (who could pay) in their town.

In the sections that follow I describe in the detail how nurses got to Ireland with the aid of professional nurse recruitment agencies and recruiters for private nursing homes. Since the focus of this study is on nurses, I will only briefly describe the role of the “transformers” who were responsible for the recruitment of workers for the service and entertainment industry.

I. The Evolution and Role of the Migration Industry

A. Professional Nurse Recruitment Agencies I

One of the leading recruiters of Filipino nurses into Ireland was a recruitment agency that branched out from deploying Irish nurses to the Middle East and the United States to recruiting non-EU nurses, such as Filipinos, for Ireland when the shortage of nurses became critical in 2000. The first batch of Filipino nurses the agency recruited arrived in June 2000 and was placed in the Dublin Academic Teaching Hospitals (DATH). These were among the first Filipino nurses to arrive in Ireland[18].

In order to recruit Filipino nurses, the Irish recruitment agency needed to partner with a Filipino recruitment agency. Not knowing anyone to partner with in the Philippines, they sought the assistance of the Nursing Director of their client hospital in the Middle East to introduce them to the Philippine agency that supplied Filipino nurses for their hospital. Soon after their introduction in early 2000, a transnational partnership was forged between the Irish and the Philippine agency.

As I have mentioned elsewhere, the Irish recruitment agency decided to recruit Filipino nurses for a variety of reasons: a) they were trained in the medium of English; b) many had overseas experience; c) there was an oversupply of nurses in the Philippines; d) their training has been recognized by the U.S., the U.K., and the Irish Nursing Board (An Bord Altranais, ABA henceforth); and e) having worked with Filipino nurses in the past while practicing her nursing profession, the founder of the agency had seen firsthand the capabilities of Filipino nurses.

[18] They were considered the first Filipino nurses to have arrived in Ireland, although private nursing homes (discussed in the next section) had already brought in Filipino nurses into Ireland two months prior (April 2000).

The recruitment strategy employed by the agency was a “structured”, “methodical”, “Catholic-Christian” approach to recruitment and it helped that the founder was an Irish nurse who for some time had worked outside of Ireland, and thus, had an understanding of what it was to be a migrant worker.

> “I worked as a young nurse myself in Baghdad and also the States. And I also came from a very large family and there are nine of us, many of us were nurses, so we all traveled. So I have a very good understanding of what it is like to leave home as a very young person, as a very young nurse. So when we were recruiting for Ireland, I went to the Directors of Nursing who were extremely cooperative in all of the hospitals and you know they were very open to ideas about accommodation, and flights, and setting everything in place that people were going to be very well looked after. Or the pathway is made easy for them so that they didn’t have to worry.”

> “I think it’s [recruitment] a very structured approach. We meet everybody. We give everybody orientation in the Philippines. I am a nurse. I think I understand that we will be very structured in our approach. We have a very methodical approach to recruitment. We are very honest to the candidates. I am firm. I don’t force anybody to come. If they are not happy about coming, no problem. There is no penalty. Also we have very good contract. We recruit for very good clients. I would never place anybody where I would never go myself. I want to assure [them] that there is safety there. That they are well looked after; that the accommodation is not dreadful when they arrive; that they are safe. And I suppose the other thing is that we have an open door policy. I am very approachable, I think. I’d like to think that my daughter is properly looked after when she went somewhere in the world. I have sort of a very Catholic Christian approach to the whole process. And I don’t mislead anybody. I don’t go out there telling anybody that you are going to have a great time in Ireland. I tell them you are coming to work. They’ll be lonely. They’ll be homesick. Financially they will be well-off, but there is always a price. Those are the things and the fact that they can bring their families. We lobbied for that very hard over the years. I was involved in that. I fought very hard to bring their husbands and their children. It’s natural. I told the

> Minister of Justice at that time, this is not Saudi Arabia. You know people should have their families with them if they choose to do that."

Global Recruitment. The Irish agency recruited Filipino nurses not just in the Philippines, but from all corners of the world. Filipino workers with overseas experience were preferred candidates because they had more experience, had proven that they can work in a multi-cultural setting, had been exposed to more technologically advanced medical equipment, and when in locations closer to Ireland such as the Middle East, were therefore, cheaper to fly than if they were hired directly from the Philippines. The agency would set up job interviews in various countries in the Middle East with representatives of their clients present to do the interviews. In Singapore, the agency took advantage of advances in telecommunications technology by conducting the interview via video conference, saving time and travel costs.

In the Philippines, the agency conducted interviews in Cebu and Manila. As was true in their recruitment drives in the Middle East, representatives of the client hospitals arrived to interview the candidates. However, international recruitment agencies were required to work with a local agency in the Philippines, and had to navigate the bureaucracy of the POEA. They were required to conduct the interviews at a hotel, to provide list of names of the interview panel, and to give assurance that candidates would not be charged placement fees. The agency added that they got used to the system and had not had any trouble recruiting workers. Even when the agency recruited Filipino nurses outside the Philippines, they still had to partner with a Philippine recruitment agency because the workers needed an Overseas Employment Certificate to exit the Philippines again once they returned for a vacation.

The agency operates under the principle of recruiting only workers whose existing contracts are up or about to end. They find it unfair to the employers if they recruit them mid-contract i.e., once their current employer has paid for the recruitment

agency fees, on-the-job training, airfare, visa and other fees, for them to work in the hospital. It also speaks to the character of the applicant – if they could renege on their contract with their current employer, they might also do so when employed in Ireland.

Airfare, initial visa payments, and other provisions required by the standard employment contract of the POEA were covered by the agency's client hospitals. The costs paid for by the candidates covered medical certificates, passport applications, ABA registration, and use of a private courier service such as DHL to send the documents directly to the ABA. The documents – completed ABA registration form, Professional Regulatory Commission certification attesting they are nurses, school certification, and reference letter -- must come from the source and be sent directly to ABA. They comprise a large part of the expenses nurses have had to shoulder. Nurses did not seem to mind spending money for private couriers because their documents could be tracked and they were confident that their documents would find their way to the ABA. To lessen the burden and costs of follow-up, the agency in Ireland took the responsibility of tracking the candidate's documents, following-up the status of their ABA registration, and updating the candidates.

Although it is not their policy to charge placement fees to their candidates and is not permitted by Irish law, the nurses recruited by the Irish agency were charged placement fees by their partner agency in the Philippines. The nurses I interviewed brought this to the attention of the Irish agency, but were told that they were helpless about it because of conflicting policies -- it was illegal in Ireland, but it was legal in the Philippines (at that time). Had they been hired in Ireland, they would not be charged placement fees. The workers I interviewed did not pursue the issue because they were thankful to have a job in Ireland and were able to recoup their expenses in a short period of time.

Upon arrival at the airport nurses were provided accommodation and were assisted in getting their PPS Number and in setting up their bank accounts. Pioneer nurses had to find on their own the places where they could buy rice, rice cookers, phone cards, groceries, and places of worship. Succeeding batches of nurses had little problems because those who came before them showed them around. The accommodation provided by the agency was usually near their place of work and temporary (usually for 6 weeks only) until the nurses find their own accommodation. At one time 27 Filipino nurses were housed by the agency in a Fire Brigade training center. There were two single beds in a room and the weekly rent was 75 Irish pounds per person. There was also one phone, one microwave oven, and one washing machine. Phone calls to the Philippines had to be scheduled so everyone could call their relatives. Both the washing machine and microwave crashed because of overuse. There were times when the washing machine would run for an entire day.

B. Professional Nurse Recruitment Agencies II

Another agency that recruited Filipino nurses for Ireland employed a similar strategy of recruiting them both inside and outside the Philippines. This agency, founded by a married couple (the husband being a former priest), is very familiar with church facilities and services in Ireland and the Philippines, and they rent church facilities for some stages in the recruitment process. In the Philippines they used the facilities for conducting exams and interviews, while in Ireland they use them for temporary accommodation and orientation.

In the Philippines, their job candidates were required to take a written exam and undergo an interview, which were mostly conducted in Metro Manila. Occasionally, interviewers would travel to other parts of the Philippines for manpower pooling in preparation for the job orders from their clients. One nurse relayed the

story of her interview inside a church. During the interview the power went out, so they used candles and flashlights. When the candles were not enough to illuminate the church, the parish priest used the headlights of his vehicle to provide additional light.

Whenever the agency receives job orders from their clients, the agency contacts qualified candidates and arranges interviews, usually at a hotel in Manila. Representatives of their clients will fly to the Philippines to conduct the interview. Job applicants from the provinces must pay their own way to get to the interview venue. Some applicants from the Visayas region have to book flights to get to Manila, a costly endeavor. Compared to a nurse's salary in the Philippines, the airfare they pay to Manila is very expensive. Nurses are gambling by flying to Manila for an interview, as there is no assurance that they will be selected by the employers in Ireland. Within a week of the interview nurses are informed, however. Those selected are asked to return for "final interview," at which time they are simply asked whether or not they will accept the job. If they agree, they are asked to pay processing fees, take medical exams, apply for a visa, and complete other necessary forms.

The same agency has recruited Filipino workers in Singapore, with the help of a partner agency in Malaysia. The partner agency's representative travels to Singapore to conduct recruitment drives there. They were criticized by hospitals in Singapore because Filipino nurses whose contracts were about to expire were no longer renewing their contracts. This means turnovers, which are costly for the hospitals in Singapore as they have to recruit and train new nurses once again. Because of the negative attention generated by their recruitment drives, the agency relocated the interviews at a hotel in Johore Bahru, the border separating Singapore and Malaysia, so as not to reveal that they were recruiting in Singapore.

The nurses recruited by the agency were provided accommodation and orientation upon arrival in Ireland. In some cases the agency housed them temporarily

in retreat houses because they have good facilities that and are often nearly empty. They have enough beds for the nurses and seminar rooms where they receive orientation about Ireland, its culture, traditions, banking system, shopping, groceries, Church service, and more. Nurses stay at the retreat houses usually just for the weekend or a week. In many cases, however, the agency has other ready accommodation for the nurses and the first month's rent is on them.

C. Nurse recruitment by private nursing homes

Private nursing homes have suffered the most from the acute nursing shortage in Ireland because they cannot compete with the public health institutions (tertiary hospitals), which offer more competitive salaries and benefits. In addition, because nurses are free to move about within the health sector, many nurses working in nursing homes resign and transfer to a public hospital when the opportunity arises. The shortage of manpower led a private nursing home association to set their sights on recruiting nurses from abroad. This was reinforced by news that the Dublin Academic Teaching Hospitals were embarking on job missions in the Philippines. The association was particularly interested in Filipinos because a lot of the nurse matrons in these private nursing homes had worked abroad with Filipino nurses and were aware of their capabilities.

The first challenge for the association was to find a contact person in the Philippines who could help them jumpstart the recruitment process. The association sought the help of the religious orders in Ireland for help identifying a conduit for the recruitment of nurses in the Philippines. They rang the Columban Fathers, who have a long history in the Philippines, but they did not want to get involved. They then rang the headquarters in Ireland of the Holy Ghost Fathers (or the Spiritians as they are more commonly known in the Philippines) who had just started in the Philippines.

Since Fr. O'Reilly[19], the leader of the Holy Ghost Congregation in South-East Asia, was the only Irish Spiritian in the Philippines at the time, the mission's headquarters in Ireland gave them his fax number. In the fax, the association asked Fr. O'Reilly to look for a contact person who knew about nursing in the Philippines to do two things: a) look for nurses; and b) to liaise with them.

Fr. O'Reilly was skeptical at first. He did not want Filipinos to be conned by a bogus agency, so he had the association checked out by a close friend of a member of the association. Having verified the authenticity of the association, he agreed to become the conduit to find a person with whom the association could work directly.

Being a Chaplain of the Marian Sisters Hospital (MSH henceforth), Fr. O'Reilly approached Sister Esmeralda the Administrator of the hospital and informed her about the association looking for nurses. Concerned they will lose their nurses if they got involved in recruitment, Sr. Esmeralda in turn contacted Ms. Romero, a nursing school Professor, who at that time was in the process of establishing a new nursing school.

The call from Sr. Esmeralda caught Ms. Romero by surprise as their conversation started with "Ms. Romero, do you want a job in Ireland?" After a few minutes of conversation Ms. Romero accepted the offer to become the liaison of the association and help identify nurses. She accepted the offer because she felt responsible for producing so many nurses in her City. Many ended up jobless, or working in non-nursing jobs such as sales, clerical work, and so on. In addition, she was concerned about the safety of the Clinical Instructors in the nursing school as the peace and order condition in the area was deteriorating with kidnappings on the rise.

[19] Fr. O'Reilly is a pseudonym along with all the names of persons, hospitals, and recruitment agencies mentioned in this chapter.

This was her chance to provide them with opportunities to practice their profession, put them out of harm's way, and better their lives.

Soon after she accepted the liaison job, Fr. O'Reilly gave her the document faxed by the association, which was a flyer looking for nurses, and forwarded her name and contact information to the association. This marked the beginning of Ms. Romero's participation in the process and the end of Fr. O'Reilly's. Fr. O'Reilly decided to distance himself from the recruitment because of the pressure that he was getting from the people thinking that he was "a great fixer and mover," as he called it. People would approach him or wait in his doorsteps asking, "Can you do something for my daughter?" "Can you do something for my son?"

Long distance communications between Ms. Romero and representatives from the association soon followed. Ms. Romero realized the seriousness of the association in their intention to recruit nurses when she received 40 application forms for nursing registration at the ABA and seed money for incidental expenses such as for transportation, communication, mailing, and other processing costs.

It was a challenge to recruit nurses because many were skeptical and did not know where Ireland was, including Ms. Romero. She researched Ireland, its people, and religion, and upon finding that Ireland was majority Catholic and a major source of missionaries to the Philippines she concluded that it was a safe country, and committed fully to the recruitment process. Her concern though was whether people would believe that there were real jobs in Ireland. She heard from friends that some people were saying they were being fooled by Ms. Romero. Worse, some people accused her of being an illegal recruiter, which is a serious charge in the Philippines. The general lack of knowledge among people about Ireland didn't help either, as it bred myths that there were many witches and vampires in Ireland, and that the Irish have red eyes. Ms. Romero considered this "crab mentality" to pull people down, so

that they could not achieve anything. What kept her going was the fact that a priest and nun were contacted by the association, and she rationalized that the association would not use them to commit an unlawful act. What also worked for Ms. Romero was that the nurses did not pay anything up front except the cost of getting a passport and for the certification from the Professional Regulatory Commission confirming that they are registered nurses. Everything else, such as registration to the An Bord Altranais, visa fees, and airfare were covered by the association. This no-cash outlay on the part of the nurses made it easy to gather more than enough interested nurses.

Representatives from the association arrived in the City in March 2000 to conduct the interview. News of the interviews spread and a large number were conducted in the Maria Christina Hotel. Some even heard of the news from the Bishop of the City, who announced it at the Church service.

> "My friend was interviewed and during the interview she asked if they are still looking for nurses. They said "Yes," so she contacted me. Then I contacted my other friend who is working at the Sisters of Mercy hospital to join me at the Hotel for an interview. My friend in turn invited others at the hospital to come with her as well. Thus, many of us were interviewed as soon as we submitted our credentials to them." – *Ferna*, nurse, arrived in Ireland October 2000

Despite the decision of the management of the MSH not to get involved with the recruitment, and Ms. Romero's best efforts to discourage MSH nurses from applying many did anyway. Ms. Romero had to tell the MSH nurses to ask the blessings of the MSH management before she would entertain their applications.

After the interview, the completed application forms of successful candidates were sent to the An Bord Altranais (ABA) for approval and determination of their place of adaptation (training/assessment). Submission of completed documents such as the ABA application, job offer, and job contract, were all done through fax, which

contributed to fast processing of documents (the internet was not popular then in the City). An Bord Altranais approval, placement of adaptation, and job contract were the main requirements in the Irish visa application. At the time, there was a special visa scheme in Ireland for nurses, the Mary Harney Visa, named after the Minister of Trade and Enterprise. Visa processing took less than a month to process and was initially good only for three months, but extended to two years as soon as the nurses passed the period of assessment.

The next hurdle for Ms. Romero was to find a travel agency that would fly the nurses to Ireland. They reached an agreement with Fortune Travel, but needed a guarantor, who was a nurse with sufficient means, because up-front costs of transportation were initially paid for by the travel agency and reimbursed later by the association.

The first 40 nurses paid nothing for the chance to work in Ireland. Ms. Romero was to be one of the first 40, but she delayed her departure because after the first 40 the association requested another 20, then another 20, until the nursing positions had been saturated.

The association also requested Ms. Romero to look for care staff. She provided the association with the curriculum of the midwifery program in the Philippines and the 10-month health aide course, which focused on bedside care, for them to decide whether graduates of these courses met the skills requirement of a care staff. The nod from the association was welcomed by Ms. Romero, as it also provided job opportunities for many midwives, health aide course graduates, and "under board" nurses i.e., those who did not pass the board exam. Initially they requested 20 care staff, then another 20, then another 20, until she lost count.

Getting out

Getting the nurses out of the Philippines was an issue. The association opted to hire nurses through direct hiring. As I have indicated earlier, if a nursing home in Ireland were to hire fewer than five nurses, they could hire the nurses directly i.e., without partnering with a licensed Philippine recruitment agency. If it chose to hire five or more workers, by Philippine law, it would have to partner with a local agency in the Philippines. Avoiding this partnership was desirable for Irish employers because that would avoid a point of conflict between Irish and Philippine laws. Irish law stipulates that the cost of recruitment be borne by the employer and prohibits the charging of placement fees from the recruited workers[20], while in the Philippines local recruitment agencies were allowed to charge placement fees in the amount equivalent to one month salary[21,22] (and they generally took advantage of this allowance).

Each candidate nurse offered a job by the association was assigned to a specific member nursing home. In the direct hiring process, the contracting parties are the worker and the owner/administrator/proprietor of the member nursing home, not the association. For example, the association would provide Valley Nursing home with four nurses. The owner of Valley Nursing Home would contract with the nurses,

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[20] *"Care trade": The international brokering of health care professionals*, by Susan Maybud and Christiane Wiskow, in: *Merchants of Labour*, edited by Christiane Kuptsch, International Institute for Labour Studies, ILO, Geneva, 2006.

[21] POEA Governing Board Resolution No. 2, series of 1998, Department Order No. 34, Series of 1996, and POEA Memorandum Circular No. 14, Series of 1999 authorize a recruitment agency to collect from its hired workers "an amount equivalent to one month salary, exclusive of documentation and processing costs".

[22] The Philippine government addressed this conflict in the 2002 Rules and Regulations Governing Overseas Employment. Rule 5, Section 3 stipulates: "Except where the prevailing system in the country where the worker is to be deployed, either by law, policy or practice, do not allow the charging or collection of placement and recruitment fee, a land-based agency may charge and collect from its hired workers a placement fee in an amount equivalent to one month salary, exclusive of documentation costs."

not the association. In the Irish visa application, it is the owner of the nursing home who is explicitly written as the contracting party.

However, the volume of nurses and care staff recruited by the association alarmed the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in Cebu City where the recruitment documents were lodged for POEA approval. Although the contracting parties were the individual members of the association, the massive number of applications lodged simultaneously by the members led the Philippine government to treat the association as the contracting party, which meant that the members could not direct hire and would have to partner with a Philippine recruitment agency. This meant additional costs, including placement fees equivalent to one month salary of the nurse in Ireland, and close scrutiny of the nursing homes' contracts. Ms. Romero appealed to the DOLE to let the nurses go because the employers were willing to, and technically could, direct hire nurses. She said, DOLE, which was supposed to find employment for Filipino workers, not only failed to locate employment for workers, but also became the impediment to the process.

Despite Ms. Romero's pleadings, the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), a branch of DOLE mandated to protect the rights of migrant workers, denied the deployment of the nurses to Ireland and, thus, the Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC), which Overseas Filipino Workers present at the gateway airport. The employers then decided to bypass POEA-DOLE altogether, since all the job applicants had the documents required by the Irish government for an Irish visa.

To get the nurses out of the Philippines, the association decided to enlist the services of an escort service at the gateway airport. In April 2000, the first five nurses recruited by the association left the Philippines with the help of the escort service. Their success in exiting the country was particularly important because: a) it

confirmed that the escort service worked; b) that the job opportunities were true; and c) and they provided instant feedback about Ireland, their employers and jobs, and what to expect at the gateway airport. But, how did the escort service operate?

Bypassing the POEA through an Escort Service

In the next three sections, I discuss the experience of the nurses I interviewed who were recruited by the nursing homes in Ireland who left the Philippines via the escort service, and the beginnings and demise of the escort service. Although I interviewed nurses who left the Philippines for Ireland at various periods in 2000, I can only describe the experience of those who left in September and October 2000 as other nurses requested that this part of the interview be off the record.

September 2000 batch

The night before their departure in Ireland, the nurses were booked at a hotel where they were briefed about what would transpire at the airport the next day. They were told to follow the instructions of their contacts inside the airport; to wear light colored dresses, such as white or light pink for easy recognition by their contacts; be next to each other at all times; and they are warned that if one of them were to get separated or land into trouble, that person might not be able to get out of the country.

The nurses questioned why they had to skip the POEA and were told that: a) POEA has too many requirements, including the Pre-departure Orientation Seminar (PDOS), medical examinations that might delay their deployment or might force the worker to get medical certificate underhandedly; b) it would take too long to process their travel and employment documents at the POEA, while their employers already wanted them to get to Ireland as soon as possible; they still were to undergo a 6-week period of adaptation (supervised training) before they could become registered nurses

in Ireland; and c) they had fulfilled all the legal requirements needed to work in Ireland.

On the day of departure, as instructed, as soon as they got out of the taxi at the airport terminal, they waited for a man who gave them a final briefing. After passing through the security x-ray machine they proceeded to a waiting area inside the terminal. All six of them sat together but did not speak to each other. As narrated by the nurses, at the waiting area, another man approached them and said, “Come now. Stand up and follow me. Relax. Be Alert.” At this point, the nurses were really nervous. The man instructed them to line up at specific counters at every step of the departure process: at the check-in counter of their carrier (Singapore Airlines), terminal fee booth, and at the immigration counter. Presumably, these people, including the immigration personnel, were involved in this illegal activity. As briefed by the man who gave the nurses these instructions, they were to pass the immigration clearance manned by an officer who already had their names.

At the airline check-in counter, the nurses said they were extremely nervous because of the presence of security cameras and roving airport security staff. At one point the line got too long and one of the airport staff asked some of them to transfer to another line, but the recruits did not comply because they had been instructed to check-in at this particular counter and be together at all times. They breathed a temporary sigh of relief when the staff did not force the issue. One key informant believed that the female staff member who checked them in was also involved in the scheme because they were instructed specifically to line up at one particular counter and were not asked for POEA documentation or to pay the travel tax, which is required for check-in.

After checking-in with their carrier, they proceeded to the terminal fee booth. As soon as they entered the room where the booth was located another man

summoned them through the glass window to come to him. After paying the necessary fees they proceeded to queue at a designated immigration counter.

The queue at the immigration counter was nerve wracking as they awaited their turn to hand their passport, embarkation card, terminal fee receipt, boarding pass, and other travel documents to the immigration officer. Despite lacking the OEC required by law for OFWs, the female immigration officer manning the booth let each one of them through.

The last stop was the gate. At the gate, security was tight and two female and one male security staff again checked their travel documents, but the male staff told the two female staff that “They’re Okay”, and cleared them to go.

October 2000 batch

The October 2000 batch had a similar experience, although the strategy for getting them out of the Philippines had evolved and the number of players at the airport seemed to have expanded. This was despite the mounting pressure coming from the POEA and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) which had been documenting the arrival in Ireland of OFWs without POEA documentation.

Like the earlier batch, on the night before their departure for Ireland, nurses stayed at a hotel where they were briefed about what they should do at the airport. This time, however, a team leader was selected among the nurses. They were told that she would be approached by a man who would provide her with instructions on what to do to get all the way to the gate. The other nurses would simply follow the team leader and go wherever she would go. Unlike the earlier batch who were told to stay next to each other, the nurses in later batches were told to keep their distance from each other, but to do what the leader did.

At the airport the following day, a woman met them for the final briefing and showed them where to enter. After their bags were x-rayed, they proceeded to the

waiting area to wait for their contact. A man came and looked for the leader and gave her specific instructions on how to make it all the way to the airport gate. Only the leader was briefed putting tremendous pressure on her to get it right.

The leader proceeded to a specific airline check-in counter. The others followed keeping their distance from each other by staying a few persons apart. After every one had checked-in, the leader proceeded to a particular terminal fee booth, and the others followed discreetly. After paying the terminal fee, the leader lined up at a specific immigration counter. The others went to the same immigration counter. However, the queue got too long and a roving male immigration officer cut the line and told the rest to transfer to another immigration counter. The other members of the group that got cut did not transfer, which did not go unnoticed by the roving immigration officer. They were surprised when the officer whispered "You're going to Ireland, right? Don't worry. They know (pointing to the immigration officers at the other booths)." They then transferred to another line.

After successfully navigating the immigration area, they proceeded to the gate entrance where their boarding passes and passports were again checked. It was only after they were seated at the gate that they could finally breathe a big sigh of relief.

The beginnings and demise of the escort service for workers to Ireland.

While the nursing home association utilized the escort service to bring in Filipino nurses to Ireland, it was not the only group that availed themselves of the escort service. The first recruitment agency to do so was engaged in the recruitment of Filipino workers for the service and manufacturing sectors in Ireland, such as hotel, restaurant, and others. They had been in the recruitment business for almost a year when the Philippine Consulate in Ireland began to strictly implement the minimum contract provisions for standard employment contracts required by the POEA (detailed

in the previous chapter). According to the recruiter who was responsible for bringing in over 400 Filipino workers to Ireland, some of the provisions were unrealistic in Ireland and would close opportunities for Filipinos if followed strictly. For example:

(b) *Airfare*. In 2000, airfare from the Philippines to Ireland was very expensive because of the lack of competition among airlines serving the Philippines to Ireland route. Yet, other non-EU English speaking workers typically paid their own way to work in Ireland.

(c) *Free dental treatment*. Irish workers did not even enjoy this benefit. When they had a tooth problem they would pay on their own.

(f) *Repatriation of remains*, in the event the worker dies in Ireland. This would cost the employer about 10,000 Euros per worker.

He cited a hypothetical example of an employer who hires 10 workers. Each Filipino worker would cost the employer €3,000 or a total of €30,000 to bring them over, that is, assuming none of them were to die while in Ireland, which would mean additional €10,000 for every worker death. Even when employers preferred to hire Filipinos, they could get workers far cheaper from other non-EU countries. The recruiter believed that the Philippine government should not insist on the provisions of the contract which he considered to be much stronger than a unionized contract, because employers in Ireland could not afford it and alternative labor markets are available (for example, India, Pakistan, Brazil, and other EU countries). This was especially true for jobs requiring more brawn and minimal English language skills.

Although the minimum contract provisions had been in place for nearly a decade when the recruitment of workers to Ireland started, the recruiter questioned the strict adherence to this policy by the Philippine Consulate in Ireland because he had been able to recruit Filipino workers to Ireland for about a year on contracts that did not meet the minimum contract provisions. Why the change in policy? He believed

that it was to accommodate a friend of the Honorary Consul who put up an agency that promised to bring in Filipino workers with contracts meeting the minimum contract provisions, and to develop a monopoly in the recruitment of Filipino workers. He believed this to be true because subsequently the Consul had refused to sign contracts that did not meet the minimum contract provisions.

In my view, however, the Honorary Consul was simply implementing the rules and putting a stop to the recruiter's practice. Part of the role of the Honorary Consul of the Philippines to Ireland is to verify and authenticate the documents at the site of employment articulated in Book 3, Rule 1 of the 1991 RRGOE which is on Accreditation of Principals and Registration of Projects by Land-based Agencies/Contractors. These documents include:

1. Standard or master employment contract
2. Special power of attorney/service agreement (with a recruitment agency in the Philippines)
3. Manpower request from foreign principal indicating skills, wages and the number of workers needed; and
4. Other documents which the POEA may find necessary

Without the Honorary Consul's signature, the POEA will not approve the employment contract, and therefore, not issue the OEC needed by the prospective OFW to get out of the country.

Since none of the recruitment agencies' employer-clients would agree to all the terms of the standard employment contract, the agency pleaded with the Honorary Consul to sign the documents so that workers could get POEA clearance and get to work in Ireland. When the Honorary Consul remained firm in his decision not to sign the documents until the minimum provisions had been satisfied, the agency contacted their partner agency in the Philippines to find a way to bypass the POEA. Their

partner agency in the Philippines solicited the help of a very high ranking government official who contacted his friend, a supervisor at the Immigration Bureau, to help arrange the exit of the workers. Because of the large number of people needed for the operation, the supervisor at the airport asked for $500 grease money per worker.

The recruiter in Ireland agreed to pay the price so as not to risk losing the job orders. However, it was the workers who had been recruited by the agency who were asked to foot the $500 bill in addition to the placement fees that they had already paid.[23] The agency told them they would be unable to leave if they did not pay the $500 because the money would be used to bribe some Immigration officers at the airport, and that they had gone to great lengths to make these arrangements for them. Only those who were recruited by the agency personally paid the bribe.

Thus began the arrival in Ireland of Filipino workers with no POEA documentation. From the point of view of the Philippine government they were undocumented workers. From the perspective of the Irish government they were documented because they had all the necessary work permits/visas and the Irish government does not recognize the POEA's OEC. According to the recruiter, the OEC issued by the POEA is worthless once you are inside the plane bound for Ireland. Thus, the aim of the whole process at the airport of origin was to board the plane.

Bribing immigration officials hastened the deployment of Filipino workers to Ireland. With the escort service they were able to deploy workers within a week's time. The recruiter added that their employer-clients were surprised to hear them say, "How soon do you want them?" Had they complied with the POEA requirements, it would have been more costly to the employer, and the deployment of workers would have been delayed by at least a month.

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[23] The nurses who were recruited by the association did not have to worry about it as the association took care of it.

The arrival in Ireland of Filipinos without POEA documentation did not go unnoticed by the Philippine Consulate in Ireland. At the Dublin airport the Consul took photos to document for the POEA the ongoing arrival of Filipinos who had bypassed the POEA. This led to mounting pressure in the Philippines to crack down on this practice at the gateway airport, forcing the process to evolve. While every worker escorted in earlier batches was told what to do at the airport, members of later batches were told to observe and follow the designated leader's every move. Eventually the recruiters abandoned the practice because of too much heat. The recruiters then devised other tactics to smuggle workers out by sending them on one-way flights to Thailand or Macau, and then flying them to Ireland from there.

Pressure also mounted in Ireland, as the recruiter faced lawsuits because their partner agency in the Philippines charged placement fees– a violation of Irish law. Some workers filed a complaint and got their money back, while others received threats against their family in the Philippines. This encouraged others to issue counter-threats against the recruiter and their family in the Philippines. However, most workers left it up to God to exact the appropriate punishment on the recruiters. Notwithstanding these disputes, many still believe they owe a debt of gratitude to the recruiter for the opportunity to work in Ireland.

As for the Filipino workers who arrived in Ireland on contracts that meet the minimum provisions set forth by the POEA, many ended up receiving lower than expected monthly incomes once in Ireland because their airfare was deducted from their salaries. And when the workers' contracts were up for renewal, their contracts were revised and made more favorable to the employer. The contentious provisions such as the repatriation of remains and dental treatment clauses were removed, once the workers were in Ireland and no longer had to deal with the POEA. Since the workers contracts were only good for one year and subject to renewal, some workers

volunteered to pay the work permit fee, which supposedly was the responsibility of the employer, so they could continue working and stay legally in Ireland.[24]

D. The "Transformers"

The Limerick Agency

The Limerick agency was established by a Filipina married to an Irish national. The establishment of an agency came naturally for them as it was a transition to an almost decade long practice of inviting her relatives and friends in the Philippines to visit Ireland, initially as tourists. This began soon after she joined her Irish husband in 1988. Her story is typical of the chain migration that has become prevalent in Ireland.

> "So I started (bringing them to Ireland) right away. I actually did not waste time. By 1990, I already had 3 tourists - my brothers. But, since there was a shortage of workers actually here, I can recommend them to people and they will take them. And they were delighted to. It was not strict at that time. And there was not that many Filipinos either that would report you [to the authorities]. You are paid cash… black market. So eventually, you know, they are married, and they want their wives to be brought over. So, we brought over their wives. Tourist again! And their wives want their sisters and brothers to join them, so we brought them over again. So my name and my husband's name, we just alternate[in sponsoring them], "Who will do this (sponsor)?" "Who will do this?" (laughing). Eventually, within 2 years, I brought about 20 of them.
>
> "Of course there were some refusals, but [my husband] will not take no for an answer. He'll do everything. Even if he had to sign 10 pages of documents saying that they have to return to the Philippines. We sign them, but they wouldn't check anyway whether they are still here or not. That's the main thing. And we won't report them. They are all my family anyway. So there were 20 of them over the period of 2 years. "

[24] Irish law stipulates that it is the responsibility of the employer and that it is illegal for recruitment agencies to deduct the wages of workers to pay for the costs of recruitment. *The Companion Document of the Commonwealth Code of Practice* recommends that "governments enter "auditable" arrangements with recruitment agencies and set up monitoring mechanisms."
http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Feature_stories/lang--en/WCMS_068452/index.htm Accessed May 3, 2011 12:56 PM ET.

They decided to form an agency soon after learning that Ireland was in short supply of skilled, English speaking workers. Being married to an Irish national, they had no restrictions in putting up the business. The hotel industry was one of their biggest clients. Word spread quickly in the hotel industry that they could provide workers, so job orders kept on coming.

Given that the job orders were substantial, they established a local agency in the Philippines which they let a relative manage. They focused the recruitment in her hometown, thus their candidates were mostly relatives, friends, neighbors, or people from their hometown. While some of their candidates had the skills needed by their employer, others were deficient or simply not qualified. Nonetheless, because these candidates could afford or could find a way to pay the placement fees, the agency was proactive in getting as many of them as possible to Ireland. As recruitment agents they went to extra lengths to enhance the selection chances of their candidates. They manufactured CVs, or spiced up existing ones so they would meet the employers' requirements. They spent significant time just fabricating CVs for various companies. Different printers were used to have a variety of fonts. They made sure that the CVs did not have telephone numbers, only addresses so that employers could not contact the candidate directly. They also prepared a cover in the event that the workers were found to be lacking in skills once in Ireland. If, for example, a client at a security agency discovered that their employees did not have sufficient skills, the agents would say, "You know the security job in the Philippines is different from here. It's a different system. They do it in a Filipino way. And no worries, we will train them." The goal of the whole process is to get the candidates a work permit and bring them to Ireland. Once they are in Ireland the employers would have to deal with what they have. Clearly, providing unqualified workers was not a good long-term strategy for the agency, as it tainted its image of providing quality workers. However,

it did serve its financial bottom line with the earnings from recruitment fees paid for by employer-clients and the job placement fees paid for by job candidates.

The agency also employed the services of an escort service at the gateway airport in the Philippines. They too feared that they would lose job orders because their employer-clients were unwilling to commit to the standard employment contract. Essentially their clients were willing pay for the work permit, salary, and recruiter's professional fee provided that the candidates paid their own way to Ireland. The agency later also faced charges as their partner agency in the Philippines collected placement fees from the job candidates in violation of Irish law.

The Dublin Agency

The Dublin agency was established by a domestic helper who arrived in Ireland in 1988 when she was brought over by her employers from Bahrain while they were on medical training in Ireland. She left her employers because she was exploited. She was not getting the salary that was promised to her in Ireland. She sought the help of a Columban priest who introduced her to an individual who would be her long-term employer – an executive of one of the leading newspapers in Ireland.

She worked for the family from 1990 to 2001, but knew that she could not stay indefinitely with the family once her wards had all grown up. At that point, she felt that she was not needed anymore, so she tendered her resignation. Having served them well for over a decade, they asked about her plans. When they learned she wanted to put up a business they offered to help.

Her first business venture was in the recruitment of Filipino workers. Her Irish employer was very instrumental in getting her started with the business. As a stockholder of a hotel chain, he was instrumental in helping her secure the job orders. Her employer provided her with a list of hotels that had vacancies and left it up to her

to go to the Human Resource (HR) departments of the hotels. She began by meeting with the HR heads and telling them that she heard they were looking for workers and that she could supply them. If they ask her for the source of the information she would drop the name of her employer.

She recruited workers from mid-December 2001-February 2002. In the 3 months of her recruitment business, she was able to bring workers for hotels, manufacturing (Nokia), processing (chicken), construction (provided 4 Engineers), and cleaning companies in Ireland. In total, she recruited about 200 workers.

To bring Filipino workers to Ireland she partnered with a recruitment agency in the Philippines, again as required by Philippine law. Unfortunately, the agency in the Philippines continued to charge the candidates placements fees despite her explicit warning that it was illegal under Irish law. This became a big problem for her in Ireland because her recruits learned upon arrival that charging placement fees was illegal. Many turned against her and demanded their money back.

She deflected the issue by telling the workers to talk to their employers because they did not cover the POEA, medical, visa fee, and airfare expenses. The employer only paid the work permit and her professional fee as recruiter in the amount of €1,000 which she splits 60-40 i.e., €600 for her and €400 for her partner agency in the Philippines. When the workers went to the employer, the employer did not refund their expenses. Instead, the employer threatened to cancel their work permits and send them back to the Philippines. About 40-50 workers were demanding a refund of €2,000 each from the employer, which would have cost the employer €100,000.

One of her clients, whose company has already secured 40 work permits for new candidates, learned about the demands of the workers she had recruited for other companies and informed her that his company would not pay for their expenses to get to Ireland. The client asked whether she could "handle" her people; if not, he would

cancel the work permits. She frankly responded that she could not handle them, but said that they were willing to come and pay for the costs of getting to Ireland. When she left the decision with the client as to whether to cancel the work permit or proceed with the recruitment, the client decided to cancel the work permits rather than risk paying €2,000 for each recruit. Thus, 40 potential migrants lost their opportunity to work in Ireland. Most of them were relatives of those who had demanded reimbursements from her.

II. The Evolution and Role of Migrant Networks

"It's like a vine!"

Aside from institutional networks, migrant networks play a key role in bringing fellow nurses in Ireland. Migrant networks are "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin" (Massey, et al., 1993:448). Upon arrival of the Filipino nurse in Ireland, their relatives and friends from all over the world instantly had the beginnings of a network in Ireland. Networks not only provide information about living and working conditions in Ireland, in many cases they also find jobs for future migrants by recommending them to their own employers. Personal recommendations are valued by Irish employers especially if they come from employees who are performing exceptionally well. The nursing professor who was responsible for recruiting hundreds of nurses and care staff for nursing homes in Ireland said that the number of people coming from her hometown has continued to grow. Upon arrival in Ireland, they searched for and found jobs, usually from within their place of work, for their own relatives, friends, and students. "It's like a vine," she described. A number of nurses she recruited for Ireland were her faculty colleagues. Once in Ireland, they learned that their employers

needed more nurses, and they recommended their former students to their employers. As a result, some of these students were surprised to receive phone calls or letters from a recruitment agency telling them that employers from Ireland were coming to interview them for a nursing job in Ireland. In the phone call or letter they were told that they had been highly recommended and this was reiterated during the interview process. The interview became just a formality.

Filipino nurses recruited from the Middle-East, Europe, Singapore, and the Philippines report having informed friends about the better living and working conditions in Ireland, and their encouragement enticed many to migrate to Ireland as well. There are many stories of nurses who were able to secure work permits for their spouses, other relatives, friends, and former colleagues by speaking to their own employers directly, or by actively sourcing work for them. Once in Ireland, the new immigrants in turn sought jobs for their own relatives and friends, and so on. Others exercised their rights to bring their own families. Others invited relatives as tourists and had them overstay deliberately. All this had the effect of exponentially raising the number of Filipinos in Ireland, leaving aside natural increase.

Bridgehead, gatekeeper, or both?

Not all migrant networks freely give information. One Filipino nurse who was recruited in Italy was able to bring into Ireland five of her siblings and 35 other relatives. Many of them worked as care assistants, cleaners, kitchen staff, and receptionists in the facility where she worked. However, while she was a bridgehead –in a position to advance the migration of others—, she also acted as a gatekeeper – prioritizing job candidates that she personally preferred and charging non-relatives money for the job offers. She was not officially a recruiter, just a person who processed the recruitment papers on behalf of her employer.

When she arrived in 2001 at the nursing home where she still works, she was the first Filipino nurse hired by the nursing home. At that time they still had vacancies for nurses, care staff, and cleaners. A number of unemployed Filipinos in Ireland (mostly the spouses of nurses) were interested in working at the nursing home, but because she was asked to process the recruitment documents of Filipino workers for the nursing home -- doing the legwork, bringing the documents to the Consul for verification and authentication, and mailing them to the Philippines--, unbeknownst to her employers, she prioritized her relatives and friends, and charged distant relatives and non-relatives substantial amounts for each position. Because of her actions she actually increased the monetary costs of migration for some rather than reducing them as network theory would suggest. She did reduce the costs of members of her network.

In separate interviews with the Filipino workers she brought to Ireland, they disclosed that she had charged them substantial amounts of money for their positions. They were also made to pay for their airfare to get to Ireland. The nursing home only covered the nurses' work visas, training fees, food and accommodation for six weeks while they were on training. For carers, cleaners, and kitchen staff, the nursing home only paid for their work permits. It comes as no surprise that some of the newly arrived nurses abandoned the nursing home immediately after passing the period of assessment (training). After having paid so much for each position, they felt no compunction to leave the nursing home immediately without having served a single additional day. As work visa holders, nurses were free to move about in the same sector. While the nursing home was at the losing end of this scheme, the recruiter was at the winning end as each resignation created another vacant position that she could fill.

The Church as source of information

Probably the least recognized, yet highly significant contributor to getting nurses to Ireland is the Catholic Church. On at least two separate occasions reported in interviews the pulpit was used to announce the availability of nursing jobs in Ireland. Some nurses from Iligan City learned about job opportunities for nurses in Ireland from a Catholic Bishop in their hometown. In one of his regular church services, he announced a nurse recruitment drive. A similar event occurred in Italy. An Irish priest who celebrated mass for the Filipino community in Italy announced that Ireland was looking for nurses and that anyone interested could go to see him. Apparently he was a friend of an administrator in one of the nursing homes in Ireland. This is how the "gatekeeper" nurse I mentioned earlier in the chapter found out about the job opportunity in Ireland.

Summary and Discussion

The migration industry

Some of the members of the newly emerging migration industry investigated here had long established reputations in the recruitment of workers in Ireland (but not Filipino workers), while others, like the transformers, emerged to seize opportunities presented by the labor market. However, none of them had experience recruiting Filipino workers to Ireland.

The Philippines' prominence in the international division of nursing labor has made Filipino nurses the target for recruitment. The reputation of Filipino nurses has been stellar. In deliberations about Ireland's nursing shortage and on the possible recruitment of foreign nurses, the Irish government has specifically recognized that the qualifications of Filipino nurses surpass the US and the UK standards.

Initially, however, the migration industry members in Ireland had no knowledge about the process of recruiting Filipino nurses. At times, reputable Irish-based recruitment agencies had to look for a partner Filipino recruitment agency in a third-country where they could conduct business because they did not know of a recruitment agency based in the Philippines. At other times, recruiters for Irish nursing homes had to solicit the help of Irish missionaries to find liaisons in the Philippines who could help them in recruitment.

Reputable Irish-based recruitment agencies and recruiters for Irish nursing homes started with very weak ties with their partner/liaisons, and more importantly, with the job candidates. They were new to the process of nursing recruitment, but as word spread about the authenticity of their job offers from the feedback of the pioneer migrants, their credibility increased, which reduced the risks of moving for potential migrants. These agencies further reduced the risks of migration by learning and adapting from their experiences with early cohorts of migrants. For example, their welcome packets evolved as input from early groups of nurses was incorporated to smooth the transition to working and living in Ireland for new recruits.

As I indicated in Chapter 2, state polices oftentimes jumpstart the migration process through sanctioned mass recruitment; however, they also influence the recruitment strategies of institutions as to where to source workers and how.

The recruitment strategy of reputable Irish-based recruitment agencies was to recruit Filipino nurses from all over the world. This strategy was influenced by the ethical recruitment and skills requirements policies of Ireland, and by the OFW exit policy of the Philippines. Filipino nurses who had worked outside the Philippines were preferred because they were more skilled, experienced, had worked in a multicultural environment, and were less costly to recruit, especially since it was not necessary to partner with a Philippine recruitment agency. The actions of recruiters

reconfigured the international labor market for nurses as the intermediate country of employment had to recruit new nurses to replenish the vacancies in their own health care system.

Changes in the skills requirements instituted by the An Bord Altranais in 2003, specifically the introduction of the IELTS, and costs of recruitment have also impacted the recruitment strategies and migrant selectivity of the migration industry. While initially Filipino nurses were the first choice in international recruitment, the low pool of Filipino nurses making the required IELTS cut-off score and the higher costs of recruiting them relative to Indian nurses, has shifted migrant recruitment in favor of India. The impact of this shift in strategy is clearly shown in Figure 4.3. Before 2004, Filipinos dominated much of the new nursing stock. Many come from a small number of origin towns as recruitment operated through networks.

Recruiters of low-skilled workers and nurses for private nursing homes were significantly influenced by the policies of the sending state (Philippines). For Filipinos to be able to work in Ireland, the Irish state only requires work visas or work permits, both of which Irish employers were able and willing to provide to Filipino job candidates. However, there was a conflict between the Philippine state's desire to protect its workers and the employers' level of desire to have them as employees. While employers in private nursing homes, hotels, and manufacturing sectors expressed a willingness to hire Filipino workers, they were unable or unwilling to fully abide with POEA's policy. Instead of walking away and losing their job orders, recruitment facilitators searched for ways to bypass the POEA. Money and political influence worked to facilitate the departure of the workers and the escort service at the international gateway airport was begun.

Following institutional theory, the strict implementation of state policies has led to the emergence of an underground market that facilitates the backdoor exit of workers. This human smuggling institution was working within the state deliberately undermining the protection that the state accords to the workers. This institution was well entrenched at the gateway airport and operated by airport staff and Immigration Bureau personnel, the very people tasked with keeping the gate from being breached by workers leaving without adequate state protection. The way the whole process of the escort service unfolded as related by the workers, i.e., with a person meeting them at the airport, and a different person giving them instructions at the waiting area, the fact that they were to queue at specific check-in counters, terminal fee and immigration counters, and the revelation later on that the roving immigration officer and the rest of the immigration counters were also involved, combined with the fact that a person at the last security check at the gate vouched for them, all point to system-wide corruption at the gateway airport. This human smuggling institution kept the flow of migrant workers to Ireland going aided by the lack of bilateral labor agreement between the Philippines and Ireland. The Irish State does not recognize the POEA's OEC, so once Filipino workers are able to successfully navigate the gateway airport in the Philippines, they are on their way to work in Ireland. The Philippine state, however, has not let up in its pursuit to plug the departure of unprotected workers. The Philippine diplomatic mission in the U.K. and Ireland, in partnership with the POEA, have exerted enough pressure to force the escort service to evolve until it was abandoned by the recruitment agencies. Again, the Philippines' approach has limited the number of Filipinos working in Ireland in the interest of protecting their workers. In this case, increased regulations came from the sending state, it is more often the receiving state, however, that imposes post-entry migration restrictions, as in the case of France (Collyer, 2005).

Clearly recruitment institutions are motivated by economic interests to keep the flow going (Castles and Miller, 1998) despite the barriers set by the state, yet some of these institutions have divergent strategies for pursuing their economic interests. Reputable international recruitment agencies that target Filipino nurses seem to impose a double-standard in their nurse recruitment strategies. Those that recruited outside the Philippines connected their candidates to their new employers only after their contracts had expired. They did this partly to protect their reputation in the industry, and partly because they felt it unfair to the hospitals that had invested so much in hiring the nurses. Recruiters also did not want to hire nurses who break their contracts because they might do the same to them.

Within the Philippines, this agency "culture" is largely absent. Nurses in the Philippines can leave, whenever they want, and agencies do not care whether the nurses are under contract or not. Administration officials of both private and public hospitals in the Philippines say that they cannot tie the nurses down because they will be unhappy in their work and not give their best efforts. Job candidates, with much higher pay awaiting them in Ireland, would rather pay whatever they owe the local hospital in the Philippines and not lose the opportunity to work abroad. Although recruitment agencies can exert pressure on the nurses to honor their contracts, they tend not to because they are more interested in meeting the demands of their foreign clients. They also tend to believe that the Philippines has an oversupply of nurses.

On the other hand, some recruiters of low-skilled workers do not care about protecting their image in the industry. They fabricate CVs to enhance the chances their candidates will be chosen by companies in Ireland. Their actions have affected the size and composition of Filipino migrant workforce in Ireland, as they have found jobs for hundreds of Filipino workers, with or without the necessary skills in hotel and restaurant, manufacturing, construction, telecommunications, security, and other

service sectors in Ireland. These institutions were responsible for the large number of low-skilled Filipino workers in Ireland during the early years of this emerging migration system. The volume would have been much lower if it were not for the bold actions of these recruitment institutions.

Institutional theorists focus mostly on the rise of migration institutions, but discussion about what slows down or halts the operations of these institutions is largely absent in the literature. The Philippines-Ireland migration context provides a few explanations: a) policy shifts, such as the policy giving preferential hiring to incoming Accession state nationals (which closed the doors for low-skilled Filipino workers); b) the unwavering government pressure that led to the end of the utilization of the escort service by some recruitment agencies in Ireland; and c) the changing economic realities in Ireland. Despite becoming very proficient in the recruitment of nurses from other countries, the recession in 2007 severely impacted the level of international recruitment and the direction of nurse recruitment in Ireland in general. One of the leading nurse recruiters I interviewed admitted that the international nurse recruitment section of her agency was very quiet, i.e., nothing was going on. With the prolonged recession and inherent advantages of Indian nurses relative to Filipino nurses, it is expected that Filipino nurse recruitment in Ireland will continue to be significantly lower than that of Indian nurses.

The creation and reproduction of migrant networks

The story of the bridgeheads showed how networks are created. Upon arrival in Ireland, they searched for ways to perform trans-boundary exchanges with their places of origin. Migrant networks provided information, employment, recommendations for potential migrants, and even financial support. Pioneer migrants wasted no time building relationships with their employers by performing

their jobs to the best of their abilities, and in the process accumulating social capital. Their employers appeared to appreciate them and when they needed additional workers, recommendations from nurse migrants were highly valued and prioritized. Former faculty members of a nursing school in the Philippines recommended their former students who were still in the Philippines for job vacancies in their places of employment, to the surprise of their former students. This was also true for spouses of nurses who worked in a stent factory in County Sligo. The quality performances of the first Filipino workers who worked there led to preferential employment of the next wave of Filipino migrants. These scenarios of pioneer Filipino migrants recommending relatives and friends to their employers have played out all over Ireland, wherever Filipinos reside. As soon as the persons they recommended arrived in Ireland, the new hires also wasted no time calling for their own relatives and friends to join them.

However, similar to DeHaas' (2010) observation, while there were bridgeheads, there were also gatekeepers. In the context of Filipino migration to Ireland examples of such were the "transformers," including the nursing home nurse. These gatekeepers saw an opportunity to make money and had the means and power to bring workers to Ireland; this set them apart from the regular migrant network that required a facilitator such as a recruitment agency. These gatekeepers established their own recruitment agencies and/or partnered with ones in the Philippines, and they prioritized their hometowns for recruitment. Often they targeted only those who could pay. This helps explain why there are so many migrants in Ireland from so few towns in the Philippines.

The heroes depicted in stories about labor migration to Ireland are generally the migrants themselves. Often overlooked have been the local Irish employers. Those employers have been responsible for renewing the work permits of low skilled

workers and for giving permanent jobs to the high skilled workers (e.g., nurses). Although not always done legally, the renewal of work permits, often for longer than five years, has allowed low-skilled Filipino workers to qualify for long-term residency. While local employers play a tremendous role in the migration process, they are often quite invisible in migration studies.

All too often when tracing the genesis of migrant networks, migration studies look for the very first people who migrated and subsequently called for others whom they know to join them. This study highlights the importance of personal networks as well as professional nurse recruitment agencies and the nursing home association in the process. The rapid growth in nurse migration can be attributed less in this case to pioneer migrant nurses, and more to people who were total strangers to the migrants (e.g., the recruiters and representatives of the association). In tracing the genesis of networks, it is thus important to establish the person(s) that linked the pioneer(s) to the destination in the first place, and to analyze the entire system through which migration ensues.

Chapter 6

Transnational Families: Family Reunification, Role Reconfigurations, and Transnational Practices

Having arrived in Ireland, a new destination for Filipinos with a very dynamic immigration policy, what has happened to the nurses and their families? In the next three sections, I discuss the experiences of the transnational families of married Filipino female nurses as they go through the process of reunification; the role (re)configurations and negotiations in the household division of labor during the stages of separation, partial, and full reunification; and their transnational practices of communication, visits and remittances to maintain and sustain their kinship ties during the stages of separation, partial and full reunification.

I. Process of Family Reunification

Family Reunification Policy of Ireland

Ireland is the only EU Member State that does not have national rules regarding family reunification enshrined in primary legislation [25]. On 22 September 2003, Council Directive 2003/86/EC was signed into law which establishes the conditions under which third country nationals in lawful residence in any of the Member States may exercise of the right to family reunification. In Paragraph 4 of the Directive, the Council recognized the importance of family reunification:

[25] Immigrant Council of Ireland – Independent Law Centre (2008). "Position on Family Reunification a Model for the Granting of Family Reunification in Ireland. Written reply to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights on issues relating to Family Reunification presented to the Committee on Wednesday, 2nd April 2008.

> "(4) Family reunification is a necessary way of making family life possible. It helps to create socio-cultural stability facilitating the integration of third country nationals in the Member State, which also serves to promote economic and social cohesion, a fundamental Community objective stated in the Treaty."
>
> *Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003*

Ireland, along with the U.K., opted-out of this Right to Family Reunification (RFR henceforth) Directive citing problems with the Common Travel Area with the United Kingdom. In the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam, Ireland and the United Kingdom opted out of the Schengen Agreement, which allowed for the freedom of movement across all EU member states, citing that it would effectively end the Common Travel Agreement that exist between the two countries. The Common Travel Area agreement allows for the crossing of Irish and British nationals between the two countries with minimal identification documentations required. Both countries cooperate in matters pertaining to immigration and enforce each other's immigration laws, even sharing information on those who are blacklisted from entering their respective countries. In opting out of the Schengen Agreement, the U.K. insisted on maintaining its borders using their own immigration control policies especially because they are in a better position to control their borders given their island status. Ireland, on the other hand, is open to signing the Schengen Agreement, but on the condition that the Common Travel Area agreement with the U.K. is no longer in effect. Given that both Ireland and the U.K. control their own border policies, they have complete autonomy to decide whether to be signatories of agreements relating to immigration within the EU Community, such as the RFR Directive.

Though not a signatory to the RFR Directive, Ireland does have a family reunification policy which is similar to the recommendations of the EU RFR Directive. In Ireland, the spouse and unmarried children under 18 years can reunify with the migrant worker provided that they have health insurance and an average

weekly net family income (less of tax, employee PRSI contribution, health contribution, superannuation, and any contributions to Personal Retirement Savings Accounts) that is above the income threshold for their family size that would qualify them for payment under the Family Income Supplement (FIS) scheme (a social assistance system). The timing of reunification depends on the migrant worker's visa and duration of residence in Ireland. Work visa holders can start bringing their families after working 3 months in Ireland. Work permit holders can reunify with their families after a year on the condition that the worker is still working within the terms of his/her work permit. Green card holders can bring their families immediately -- starting the first day of their employment.

Filipinos in professional occupations (work visa holders), like nursing, typically have no problem meeting the above requirements. Filipinos engaged in low-skilled occupations (who generally hold work permits), however, have had more difficulty because of their low pay. Recently, Ireland relaxed the family income requirements for work permit holders who have worked in Ireland for more than 3 years. This has enabled many work permit holders to bring their families to Ireland.

The pattern and factors affecting family reunification

Figure 6.1 illustrates the general pattern of family reunification of nurse families. The departure of the nurse for Ireland signals the beginning of the *separation stage.* As work visa holders, nurses would have to wait at least 3 months before they could begin the process of inviting their spouses and unmarried children under 18. While this automatically delays reunification by 3 months, nurses typically did not mention this as the primary factor delaying their migration. Instead, it was the lack of entitlement to work for their spouses (at least prior to March 2004). Their spouses could go to Ireland, but only as dependents of the nurses. They were not

permitted to work. Finding a job for the spouse was crucial for permanent reunification, however, because full family reunification would entail greater costs including, among others, the cost of renting a house or an apartment, and higher consumption of food and other basic services. To secure a work permit prior to March 2004, spouses must either have found an employer or other individual who would sponsor their work permit (€500); or acquired residency by virtue of having an Irish-born child i.e., an Irish citizen child.

Other factors that nurses and their spouses mentioned as influencing the duration of separation or pace of reunification include: security of tenure, the location of the nurses' place of work or residence, the status of the spouse's occupation or business in the Philippines, whether projects or investments in the Philippines took priority over reunification, the age and enrolment status of children, whether the nurse has secured a separate work permit for her spouse, policies in Ireland related to child benefits and children's access to education, involvement in extra-marital affairs, and other forms of crisis in the family.

Security of tenure caused some Filipinos to delay their reunification with their spouses. It takes about two years before a nurse is offered a permanent position in their place of work. Some nurses waited for tenure before bringing all their family members to Ireland.

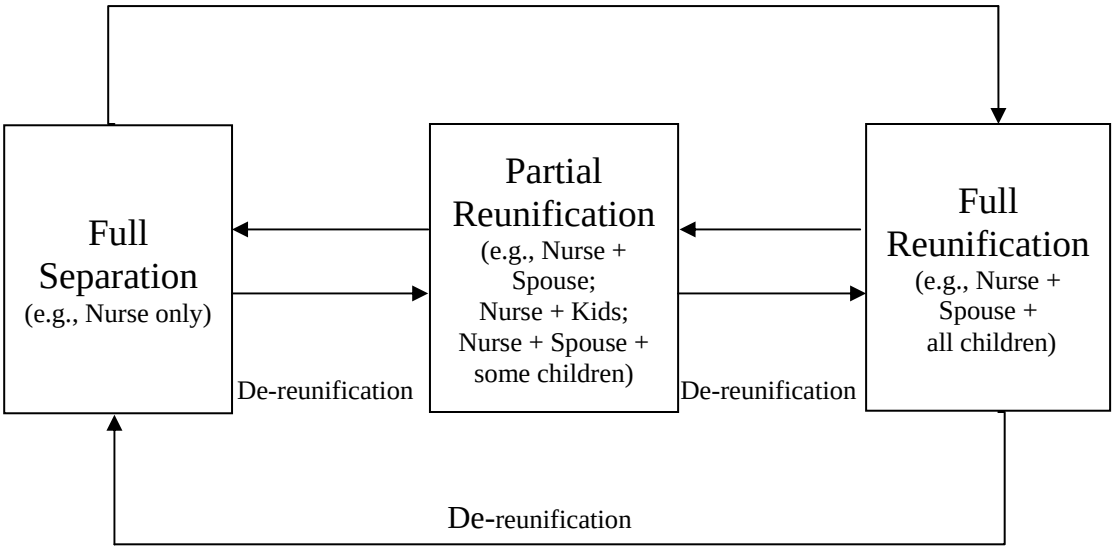

Figure 6.1. Process of Family Reunification in Ireland

Some nurses were hesitant to relocate their families in the area where they worked or lived because of its lack of "life." A nurse, who arrived in April of 2001, said:

> "It took me 2 years to decide whether to bring my family to Limerick. When we arrived here in 2001, the place was very quiet. There were not too many people. There was no life in Limerick. Now, there are many developments." – *Jane*[26]*, married, nurse*

A similar comment was made by a nurse in Sligo. These comments point to the realities that many nurses are posted in isolated areas and some waited for developments to take place in their locale to sway them into inviting their families for the purpose of reunification. Others were also uncertain about staying long in Ireland given their initial contracts were only good for two years.

[26] Jane and the name of all persons quoted in this chapter are pseudonyms.

Though most spouses resigned from their jobs months before they joined the migrant nurses in Ireland, others were reluctant to give up their careers or thriving business in the Philippines and in the process delayed the family reunification.

> "I have a thriving business in the Philippines. I am a wholesaler of Coca-Cola and San Miguel Beer, and exclusive distributor of the Absolute and Summit mineral water. At a young age, I consider myself very successful there. I was earning at least 30,000 a month, and this is in the province! But, I finally decided to leave it behind to join my wife. I initially handed over the business to my younger sibling, but he is not into it, so I had the space rented instead." *Jose – spouse of nurse*

For some nurses, reunification is simply not the priority, but projects and investments are. This delays reunification because money is spent on the projects rather than saved for the reunification.

> "It took 3 years before my husband joined me because we bought the unit next to our unit, had the walls connecting the two torn down [to make it one], and had it renovated. It took a while to complete the renovation project because of the substantial outlay. So we have to do it by segment. When we finish one segment, we stop then save up until we have enough to finish another segment. We did this until the renovation was completed. So I do not have savings here because I sent most of it to the Philippines for my family and our project. Having my husband there while the renovation was on-going was good because he oversaw the whole thing." *Mary Ann– female nurse*

One of the goals of the nurses during the separation stage is to secure a job for their spouses. This is the nurses acting out their role as migrant networks actively seeking a job for their spouses. Fortunately, for many, they do not have to look far. The retention practices of some of their employers include the employment of nurses' spouses as caregivers or cleaners in the facility where they work. This strategy is less costly than losing a nurse to another health care facility or to countries with family friendly policies like neighboring United Kingdom. Having the freedom to move

within the same sector of their employment (a benefit of having a work visa) worked for the benefit of the nurses and their families.

> "My employer sponsored the work permit of my husband. That's why we were together in just 6 months. He had his own work permit." – *Joan, married, nurse*

The duration of separation is also influenced by children's refusal to go to Ireland because they do not want to leave their friends behind, although after constant prodding some do relent in the end. The departure of one or both parents for months or years at a time made some of the children get used to not having one or both their parents around. Being separated from their parents had given them more freedom and autonomy and less longing for their parents. The lack of excitement or eagerness to reunite with parents points to this fact.

> "My son was already in high school in the Philippines when I asked him to join us, but he refused initially. It took almost 2 years of convincing before he relented. He said that he will have a hard time adjusting in Ireland. He would have to start making new friends, while in the Philippines, he has many friends and classmates. We know that it was really a tremendous sacrifice for him to leave his friends, but you know, we all need to sacrifice to be reunited here in Ireland." *Joseph – spouse of nurse*

The age and/or enrolment status of children also influence the pace of reunification. Couples with only infants and/or toddlers usually leave their children in the care of their relatives in the Philippines for an extended period of time so that they can concentrate on work in Ireland. Children who are just starting in elementary or high school are brought to Ireland whenever one or both parents are ready for them. Because high school level in Ireland is 6 years, but only 4 years in the Philippines, some Filipinos brought their children to Ireland as soon as possible, and once they finished their 3rd year high school, they are returned to the Philippines to finish their

high school degree there. Some high schools in the Philippines allow students to transfer on their fourth year and recognize Ireland's curriculum. For the parents, this had the triple advantage of maximizing the stay of their children with them in Ireland while growing up and studying, allows the child to complete high school in 4 years rather than 6, and enroll the child in colleges in the Philippines were tuition is much cheaper. Children who are close to finishing high school or elementary level in the Philippines are allowed to complete their degrees first by their parents, although some of these children would be told to go back one level when they enroll in schools in Ireland.

> "Our children were still infant and toddler, so we left them under the care of my parents. We decided to not bring them yet in Ireland at that time so that we can concentrate on working. Spouses weren't allowed to work back then, but because we do not have anything to look after in Ireland, just each other, I can take on any job offered to me on a cash-basis. I go back to the Philippines every 3 months though to check on my children." – *Frank, spouse of nurse*

Ireland's education policy of holding back some Filipino students one level upon transfer in their educational institutions discouraged Filipino children from joining their families in Ireland. Miriam's son, although still under 18 years and could still join them in Ireland as her dependent, decided to forego Ireland and earn his college degree in the Philippines:

> "We had intense discussion about that because we want him to join us while he can still be called as my dependent to complete our family in Ireland. But, he said that he would waste a year of his life if he will study here. Instead of becoming a freshman college student in the Philippines, he will be back to 4th year high school student or its equivalent in Ireland." *Miriam, married, nurse*

Ireland's Child Benefits program is a plus factor that helped in the decision of the couple to reunite despite the possibility of the spouse not getting a job because the

benefits would help supplement the income of the family. Non-EEA nationals like Filipinos qualify for Child Benefits (formerly Children's Allowance), if legally working and habitually resident in the state (at least 2 years of legal residence), with children under 16, or under 19 if the child is in full-time education, provided the child(ren) resides in Ireland with them.

> "I currently don't have a job here in Ireland. My wife is the only one working. All our five children are here and we receive Child Benefits for each one of them. The Child Benefits we received really helped us get by." – *John, spouse of nurse*

All my respondents had heard of stories of Filipino migrant workers in Ireland having extra marital affairs. Some of them actually knew of someone who was personally involved in such an affair. Various respondents warned me not to trust what I see at the malls because the families that I would see may actually be second families i.e., extra-marital affairs that bore a child in Ireland. These affairs had the effect of indefinitely postponing the reunification plans of the first family.

The realities of these extra-marital affairs in Ireland could also have the opposite effect i.e., they could contribute to the hastening of the couple's reunification in Ireland. It was often the case that some measures of protection from extra-marital affairs were employed by either or both partners. One nurse said that her husband did not want her to attend social activities like Filipino parties because he had become jealous that she might meet someone at those parties. Since extra-marital affairs are a two-way street i.e., it could also happen to the husbands left-behind, nurses strip the husband of one possible source of extra-marital relationship – the full-time stay-at-home helper. This is the main reason why many husbands resign from their jobs to take care of their children full time without the aid of any domestic helper.

> "Before I left for Ireland, we had a stay-at-home maid. She was really nice, and pretty, too. Boys in our neighborhood would be waiting outside our gate to get a glimpse of her when she gets out of the house. But, I had to let her go because I will be away, and she'll be left alone with my husband and young son. This way we avoid temptation and neighborhood gossips." *Claire, married, nurse*

Other forms of family crisis can hasten family reunification and therefore shorten the duration of separation. Jaime decided to reunite with his wife because his daughter, for lack of a female role model, was getting confused about her sexuality.

> "I knew it was time for me to reunite with my wife in Ireland because my daughter is acting like a boy. She pees the way I do. And one time, when we were in the car, she asked me when her birdie will come out." -- *Jaime*, spouse of nurse

Partial reunification

Following the separation stage is the partial or outright full reunification of families in Ireland. In a *partial reunification* scenario, at least one family member has joined the nurse, but others have not. The spouse is usually the first to follow the nurse to Ireland. The couple's reunification is initially considered a trial, to "test the waters," with the goal of securing a job for the spouse and also for the couple to assess together whether Ireland is a good place to live and raise their family. Relocating the entire family is a big decision so they want to decide that as a couple. Securing a job for the spouse in Ireland is important because of the expected spike in expenses when the children start arriving. In my study, the indecision on the part of the spouse to reunite permanently with the nurse was primarily attributed to the spouse's lack of entitlement to work prior to March 2004. In a partial reunification scenario, sometimes the spouse would bring along some of their children to reunite with the nurse. The other children who were left behind were usually those who were ineligible for reunification (married or 18 years and older), those close to graduating

from elementary or high school, those who insisted on staying behind, and those who were still infants and toddlers.

When some or all children are left behind by the couple, they delegate the authority of looking after their children to either a guardian or to the eldest child (depending on the age composition of the family). The guardian is often the child's grandparent, generally the mother of either the husband or wife. There are also instances of joint guardianship between the mother and sibling of either the husband or wife. Some couples who have relatively older kids, i.e., all are teens or some are young adults, opted for the eldest child to look after their siblings, but with constant monitoring from them, and with a back-up plan in case it did not work. The back-up plan also involved the mother or sibling of either the husband or the wife. Couples were mindful of the burden they imposed on their guardians, so as not to overburden them, they also hired a helper or nanny for the children and to help out in the guardian's household.

Outright full reunification

In an *outright full reunification* scenario, the entire family left behind in the Philippines eventually joins the nurse in Ireland. Being the only person in the family who has actually worked and lived in Ireland, full confidence is entrusted to the nurse's assessment of Ireland and the timing of the reunification of the entire family in Ireland. The decision to reunify, however, is a product of intense deliberation of the entire family including the children, with additional inputs from friends and other relatives. Despite the big dent in the family coffers of full reunification because of the cost of travel for all members, the decision was made because to them family togetherness is paramount. As a husband of a nurse puts it, "It [leaving the children behind] would be difficult. We are working here, but our head is in the Philippines. It

is best that they are here so that we don't have to worry about them." Most outright full reunification decisions reported in this study were decided by nurse families soon after the policy announcement in March 2004 giving spouses automatic entitlement to work in Ireland. Before joining the nurse in Ireland, some spouses took vocational courses on care giving, so they could have a caregiver skill that is employable in Ireland.

Partial to full reunification

The *transition from partial to full reunification* is usually a decision arrived at after the spouse's success in securing a work permit in Ireland. Soon after the spouse secures a work permit, the couple immediately makes plans to bring their children to Ireland. However, full reunification is possible only if all children are unmarried and under 18. The only way families with married children or children 18 and over could reunify is if the children could secure their own work permits. When spouses fail to secure a work permit the family can also transition from partial to full reunification, but this would mean that the entire family would be dependent solely on the nurse.

Partial to de-reunification

The *transition from partial to de-reunified family* is usually a result of spouse's failure to secure a work permit in Ireland. This scenario was common during the period before March 2004 when spouses were not permitted to work. Some spouses grew frustrated with the difficulty of finding a job, and the lack of stability (or regularity) of their cash-basis ("under-the-radar") jobs. Instead of staying in Ireland, they decided to go back to the Philippines. Most of them returned when Ireland reversed the policy starting in March 2004.

Full reunification to de-reunification

Full reunification can also transition to de-reunification. The overwhelming reasons cited for this type of transition pertain to policies in Ireland related to college tuition fees for non-EEA nationals. Filipino parents prefer that their children attend college in Ireland. However, the cost of college tuition often forces families to reconsider and instead send their children back to the Philippines where college tuition fees are much more affordable. This higher tuition fee for non-EEA nationals is due to immigration rules that do not extend the long-term residency rights of the non-EEA migrant workers to their children, thus their children are treated as foreign students whose tuitions fees are nearly three times the EU rate. Recently, the policy has been relaxed for some non-EEA nationals meeting specific criteria. For non-EEA workers who had been resident in Ireland for less than three years their children would pay tuition up to 3 times the EU rate (approximately €16,000). If non-EEA workers had been in Ireland for at least three years, however, they would only pay €7,000– the EU rate. Some families opted to send their children to the United States. They reckoned that if they are going to pay €16,000 or €7,000 for tuition anyway, they might as well send their children to colleges in the U.S where they said the quality of education is much better.

Another scenario for *full reunification transitioning to de-reunification* is when couples take their newborn children or toddlers to the Philippines to be cared for by their relatives. This decision, which they say is painful but necessary, is often made when both spouses are employed and they cannot arrange a schedule where one of them is available to take care of the child(ren) at all times. That the spouse of the nurse would resign from his or her job is generally considered, but the income that would be lost is usually substantial. If the children are quite young anyway, the parents reasoned that the children would be able to adjust when the time comes for

them to return to Ireland. These are also the same reasons why infants and toddlers born in the Philippines are often left behind by the parents under the care of relatives.

II. Role (Re)Configurations and Negotiations in the Household Division of Labor

One of the immediate impacts of the departure of a migrant worker, especially if the migrant is a mother, is the rupture of normative roles in the family (Boyd, 1989:643), specifically the reconfiguration of roles of household members in the household division of labor. Table 6.1 shows a summary of the workload in the household division of labor of the members of nurses' households at each stage of the reunification process. The stars in the table represent the level of workload i.e., the greater the number of stars next to the household member, the higher the workload.

Table 6.1 Summary of workload in the household division of labor of the members of nurses' households in the Republic of the Philippines (RP) and Republic of Ireland (ROI) at each stage of the reunification process.

Family Member	**Baseline**	**Separation Stage**	**Partial Reunification Stage**			**Full Reunification Stage**
	(Col. 1)	**(Col. 2)**	**(Col. 3)**	**(Col. 4)**	**(Col. 5)**	**(Col. 6)**
	RP	**RP**	**RP (HH with guardian)**	**RP (HH w/o guardian)**	**ROI**	**ROI**
Nurse	*****	**	**	**	**	*****
Husband	*	*****	**	**	*****	*****
Teenage Daughter	**	***	***	*****	**	***
Teenage Son	*	**	***	*****	**	***
Guardian (with helper)	-	-	*****	-		-

Household Division of Labor Before the Move: Baseline

A gendered division of labor characterizes the household of Filipino nurses in the Philippines prior to their move to Ireland (Table 6.1, column 1). The wife performed the bulk of the reproductive work such as cooking, washing of clothes, ironing of clothes, washing of dishes, shopping at wet markets, light cleaning/dusting, managing the household budget, and most child-related tasks like minding kids, preparing their breakfast, preparing them for school, and attending PTA meetings. They performed most of these household tasks despite being employed full time.

Husbands are typically considered the *padre de familia* (the head of the family), the provider, and the main breadwinner. They did the occasional heavy lifting, but rarely took the lead in other household tasks. The female nurses revealed in the mini-FGDs and in-depth interviews that it was they who mostly did the tasks in the household, and whenever they had a household help it was their husbands who benefited most by being freed from nearly all domestic responsibilities. One of the participants in the mini-FGD mentioned that at dinner time her husband would ask: "*Saan na ang tubig?*" (Where's the [glass of] water?) She said that her husband would not even get his own glass of water during dinner time. He got used to having a helper serve him.

In a household with teenagers, it was common for teenage girls to assist the mother in cooking, washing the dishes, food preparations, minding younger siblings, and sometimes in hand washing and ironing of clothes, especially in the absence of a household help. Mothers seemed to be socializing their daughters for their future domestic responsibilities. If the couple could afford a helper or a laundrywoman, the washing and ironing of clothes, and much of the tasks that the husband did on occasion like washing dishes or cleaning, were usually delegated to them, thereby freeing the husband from most household tasks. Teenage boys usually did heavy house

cleaning, like scrubbing the floor, and on occasion ran errands to the neighborhood convenience store. Like teenage girls, they are also tasked with looking after their younger siblings. Thus, growing up, girls had been socialized to reproductive work more than boys, although boys at times played a role.

Household Division of Labor After the Move: Philippines

Among nurses who migrated to Ireland, the vast majority were women. As a result, their households at home in the Philippines tended to undergo a substantial transformation of household roles.

In households where the nurse-wife left to work abroad (Table 6.1, column 2), it is typical to see that the husband stepped up to fill in the responsibilities left by the wife. Some husbands admitted that they lacked training in some aspects of domestic work especially cooking, washing and ironing clothes, but, they got by because of the pre-departure orientation of their wives; and because they consult their cookbooks, parents, friends, and their wives during their regular phone conversations.

Mon's story depicts this scenario. He and his nurse wife have four children. When his wife left for Ireland, the eldest child was only 11 years old, the youngest barely 3. Having young kids, he and his wife decided he should give up his job to give full attention to their children. He did most of the tasks that his wife had been doing before she left i.e., cooking, going to the market, managing the household budget, preparing breakfast for kids and preparing them for school, taking them to school and picking them up afterwards, helping them with assignments, and taking them to the doctor when they are sick. Though he bought a washing machine from his wife's remittances, he still hired a live-out *Manang* (an older woman) to handle the washing and the ironing of clothes. Cooking was one of the regular challenges he had to face:

> "I am a terrible cook. I am an expert in frying, but if you ask me to cook something else I would have to consult my mom, or my wife over the phone. Before she left, my wife taught me how to cook *pinakbet*, which is our favorite, but I've forgotten most of what she taught me. If you try it occasionally, it doesn't stick in your head." – *Mon, spouse of nurse*

Hiring a domestic worker to help with household chores is a bit delicate when the wife leaves behind her family to work abroad. Couples acknowledged that while it is very easy to hire a maid in the Philippines because of the high unemployment rate and cheap labor, having a live-in maid while the wife is thousands of miles away is a recipe for neighborhood gossip and temptation, which couples try to avoid. There are four ways that this dilemma of hiring a helper tends to be addressed. One, they can hire a maid if an adult female relative lives with them, e.g., the mother of either one of them. Two, some couples hire two maids instead of just one. Three, the husband resigns from his job and take care of the household tasks and child minding full time. Four, they hire an older, unattractive maid (at least from the perspective of the couple).

Sarding, an engineer, moved in with his mother-in-law and gave his mother-in-law a free hand in hiring a household help in order to "protect" himself "so that they (in-laws) will not question the selection of the maid." He added that by living with his in-laws "at least they see me always. If they don't see me, it doesn't look good. By living with them, they know that I am not doing anything bad." Still the mother-in-law hired an older woman.

Jason, a spouse of a nurse, delayed his reunification with his nurse-wife because at the time she left, he was just recently promoted to a managerial position in the educational institution where he worked. He and his wife had a two year old daughter when she left for Ireland. For him to be able to work and have someone to look after her daughter, he hired two helpers:

> "We had to hire two helpers. I have to go to work, and someone must look after my young daughter while I am working. One helper would have been enough, but you know the neighbors, they would tease and gossip about you and your maid even if there is nothing going on. So, that they could not say anything, my wife and I decided to hire two helpers. We can afford it anyway." *Jason – spouse of nurse*

Most of the spouses I interviewed, however, with some in similar important managerial positions as Jason's, resigned from their jobs or opted for early retirement to concentrate full time on doing the household tasks and minding their children. This was reinforced by my group interview of married female nurses. They acknowledged that their husbands were "vacant" for months before they joined them in Ireland. Their husbands were gainfully employed previously, but each couple decided that the spouse should resign or retire from his job and concentrate on looking after their children. Nurses' earnings seemed more than sufficient to make up for spouses' lost income and to provide for the needs of the family. When asked whether they had hired a helper to assist the husband, two nurse migrants admitted the struggles they had had with hiring a helper for their family in the Philippines. They said that while they trust their husbands, they wanted to avoid possible temptation. In addition, they did not want to hear anything negative from their neighbors.

The biggest challenges confronted by the husbands left-behind tended to involve how to deal with and explain the physiological changes experienced by their daughters. Carol had recently left for Ireland, when her two daughters had their first period.

> Jude: I go to the store and I buy their napkin. People would stare at me, and I just say "those are for my children!"

> Carol: They are soooo innocent! Since there was no other woman in the household to give them advice, I solicited the help of my mother to go visit our house and talk to her granddaughters and teach them about periods and becoming a lady.

The experience left Jude to acknowledge to himself and to his wife that he is an "*Inatay*" meaning a dad and mom combined.

The husbands left-behind had been given several monikers by their relatives and friends, which they gamely acknowledged and even used when asked about their occupation. These are testaments to the growing acceptability in Philippine society of the reconfigured roles of husbands in Filipino households. Examples of these monikers are:

> "*Housebands*", referring to their status as a full time stay at home dad/husband.
>
> "*Chemists*", short for "*Kay misis umaasa*" which means "relying on the wife."
>
> "*PNB*", which is the initial of the Philippine National Bank, but in this context, it means "*Parating Nasa Bahay*" which translates to "Always at home."
>
> "*Shy*", shy in this case doesn't mean that they are timid, quiet, or reserved, but is short for "*Siya ay taga-laba; siya ay tagaluto*, etc.." *Siya* in English, if you are pointing to a man or woman, means "He" or "She", respectively. In this case "*Siya ay taga-laba*" means "He does the laundry". "*Siya ay tagaluto*" means "He does the cooking."
>
> "*BSN*", is not short for Bachelor of Science in Nursing, but *Bana Sa Nurse*, meaning "Husband of a nurse."
> "*Inatay*", its meaning is closest to "My Goodness!", but in this context it is a conjugation of two words – *Ina* and *Itay*. *Ina* means mother while *Itay* means father.
>
> *"Tigasin"*-, its meaning is closest to "Macho," but the prefix *Tiga* is what is most important here. *Tiga* means "the one who". For example, *tigasaing*,(the one who cooks rice), *tigaluto* (the one who cooks), *tigalaba* (the one who washes clothes), *tigaplantsa* (the one who irons clothes), etc.
>
> *"Dipindot"* instead of calling themselves *dependants* of their wives, they call themselves *dipindot*. *Pindot* is "to push" like a button usually with the index finger. In this situation, the wife would "push" or nudge

> the husbands shoulder and issue a command or request. For example, while pushing or nudging the husband, the nurse would say *"maglaba ka na"* (go wash the clothes) *"magsaing ka na"* (go cook rice.) etc.
>
> *"RN"*, is short for Registered Nanny.

With the departure of the professional nurse-wives, the roles have shifted with husbands performing most of the roles previously held by their wives. The role shift became possible because the husbands could give up their jobs and could afford to be unemployed for prolonged periods of time because of the more than sufficient income of their nurse-wives once they started sending their remittances to their family in Philippines. Nowhere is this shift in roles more apparent than from this statement from Sarge, which all husbands in the focus group agreed with.

> *For four years, I was the cook, the cleaner, child minder. My wife was the earner. She was the one working. She was the head of the family. I was the light of the home then.*
>
> *--Sarge, Husband of Nurse (FGD)*

The nurse-wife's role in the household in the Philippines while in Ireland

The average monthly net income of a Filipino nurse in Ireland including overtime is about €3,000 Euros. When converted into Philippine peso, €3,000 is equivalent to almost 200,000 pesos. Since a nurses' starting salary in the Philippines is between 7,500 – 10,000 pesos per month, depending on whether one works in a private or public hospital, then their salary in Ireland is 20 times more than their salary in the Philippines. This massive jump in salary instantaneously switches the breadwinning role in the family from the husband, before the move, to the wife immediately after the move.

This gives the nurse the power of the purse strings because they become the major contributor to the household budget, and often co-manage it even while abroad. Some nurses exercise that power on occasion, but for the most part delegate the

management of finances to their spouses. Some decide on how remittances are to be spent jointly with their husbands over long distance phone calls or via the internet. Although husbands are not restricted on how to spend the wife's remittances, they stick to their agreed plans and consult the wife whenever there are miscellaneous expenses. Some nurses give their husbands discretionary funds (allowance money) to compensate for their lost income, which the husbands could spend in any way they want.

John and Josie's long distance discussion about their birthday gift to their son is an example of the dynamics on how decisions are made regarding remittance spending. It depicts the wife's power of the purse strings, with the husband consulting and concurring with his wife's decision.

> "I went shopping with my children, and the birthday boy wants a very expensive toy. It is worth 2,000 pesos! Although we can afford it with her remittances, I find it too expensive. But my boy was very insistent. He really wants the toy, so I called up my wife. I said "Your son wants this toy, but it is so expensive it is worth 2,000 pesos." My wife just said "It's only 30 Euros, buy it!." So, happy birthday, son!" - *John, spouse of nurse*

Despite their physical absence, as mothers, nurses are able to nurture and show intimacy to their children from afar. Most of the nurse-mothers I talked to communicated with their family in the Philippines at least twice a week. Sometimes they call once a day, or even three times a day especially if one of the children is sick or if there is a problem in school. Some of them intentionally stay up late in Ireland to make wake-up calls to their children and husband in the Philippines so they can prepare for school and work, respectively. The Philippines is seven hours ahead of Ireland, so wake up calls are usually made by the nurses between 10-11 PM in Ireland. Children as young as 10 years old are provided cell phones so that they can directly communicate with their mother anytime and vice versa.

Probably to compensate for their physical absence in the lives of their children, nurse-mothers tend to accede to the requests of their children for things that they do not necessarily need. The birthday gift mentioned earlier is an example. Other requests include more expensive electronic toys like Sony Play Station Portable, Xbox 360, Playstation 3, and Nintendo DS or Wii. The guilt that mothers carry for not being there for their children, the relative inexpensiveness of these items from the point of view of the mothers, the happiness that they bring to their kids for buying these toys for them, and the appreciation that mothers get in return are the reasons they cited for buying these items.

In some cases, the mothers would over-compensate their kids because of guilt feelings. Jude and Carol wanted to bring their eldest son to Ireland so their family could be completely reunified. However, being 18 years old, their son could not join them as a dependent, but would need to secure for him a work permit so he could stay for a longer term. Their son was able to secure a tourist visa, but had to leave after 3 months, which is the maximum allowed for tourists. He pleaded with them to let him stay i.e., overstay his visa, but they decided against it because not only was it unlawful, but also he was already enrolled in college in the Philippines, so the decision was made for him to leave. Back in the Philippines, their son got depressed, so they asked a relative to live with him, and awash him with monthly cash allowance equivalent to 4 times the nurses starting salary in the Philippines. At 18, their son is a college freshman, with a car and house to his own, and a monthly allowance four times what professional nurses in the Philippines make.

On some occasion, when the nurse-wife flexes her newfound economic power in the household, it could lead to some tension between the couple. Carol's brother, who is a Catholic priest, asked her to buy him a new vehicle for his ministry. Her

husband was vehemently opposed to this because was extremely expensive, but it was her money and her decision to help her brother.

Children's Role

Just as the husband's step up in a husband-left-behind household (especially those who resign from their jobs), so do teenage girls who find themselves doing more than they used to do when their mother was around. Before their mother left they assisted her in cooking, washing the dishes, food preparations, minding younger siblings, and even hand washing and ironing of clothes. With their mother abroad, daughters began to take the lead especially, in food preparation, washing dishes and cooking. Teenage boys also have expanded roles in terms of helping out in most of the household chores except in tasks associated with the kitchen.

Household Division of Labor During Partial Reunification: Philippines

When husbands join their nurse-wives in Ireland, the children are often left in the care of a guardian who is usually the mother of either parent (Table 6.1, column 3), while others are left under the stewardship of their eldest sibling (Table 6.1, column 4). When children are left with a guardian, the parents are cognizant of the extra burden they impose on the guardian, and so as not to overburden him/her, they usually provide the household with a helper. If the steward is the eldest child, however, having a helper appears to depend on whether the eldest is a daughter or a son. If the steward is a daughter, they are provided a helper.

If the steward is a son, some parents do not hire a helper to avoid temptation and the endless teasing by their son's friends. If hiring a helper is absolutely essential, the parents often hire a much, much older helper, or they ask their relatives to live with their children and help them in the day-to-day activities of the household, usually

in exchange for an "allowance." Filipino parents are quite conservative. They do not want others (e.g., their neighbors) to say anything negative about them or their children for living with a non-relative of the opposite sex without an adult relative minding them.

The choice of the eldest child as steward in the children-left behind households has its advantages. When Jude joined Carol in Ireland, he left his eldest son, who was 18 years old at that time, to take his place as the man of the house, look after the younger siblings, and manage the finances of the household. Being the eldest, he had had ample practice looking after his siblings, and it showed:

> "We were so proud of our eldest son, because the first Christmas when Carol and I were separated from them, on Christmas Eve he drove his younger siblings to the park and they had a good time there." *Jude– spouse of nurse*

Some children were thrust by their parents into roles they were unable to handle. Aside from looking after their siblings, Jude and Carol, tasked their eldest to manage the finances, but he was ill-prepared for it.

> "We made our eldest son in-charge of managing our remittances, but his younger siblings complained that they were not getting their fair share. So, change management. We decided to assign it to the second eldest, one of our daughters, but she too was the same as her older brother. We were about to transfer the responsibility over the remittances to our third child (a son) when their visa to Ireland as our dependents were approved." *Jude– spouse of nurse*

Household Division of Labor During Partial Reunification: Ireland

The husbands who joined their wives before March 2004 knew before going to Ireland that they would face prolonged unemployment because spouses were not allowed to work there, unless they were able to secure a work permit of their own.

Those who were unable to secure a work permit found themselves completely dependent on their spouses. In order to contribute to the household and not be a burden to their wives, they did most, if not all, the household tasks (Table 6.1, column 5), especially when they had children under 12 years old living with them. Under Irish law leaving a child under 12 unsupervised during the day or night for at least 30 minutes constitutes neglect. The months they were "vacant" in the Philippines doing full-time "houseband" duties, turned out to be a training ground for their domestic roles in Ireland.

> I did everything! All the tasks in the household – cooking, washing, cleaning, looking after the kids, taking them to school, picking them up afterwards, name it! I did everything! Because she works hard, and I don't have a job! So that is my contribution to the household." – *Jason, spouse of nurse*

Many spouses, however, took jobs that paid on cash basis. They took such risks to contribute to the household, lessen their dependence on their wives, and prop up their battered self-esteem. For husbands in partially reunited families with children to be able to work, many of them banded together and devised a rotating child minding arrangement. Every member of the group had his turn at looking after the other members' children while the rest engaged in cash-basis jobs. These arrangements became popular. If, for some reason, no one could take care of one's child(ren) on a particular day, they just had to phone their friends, and chances were they could hook up with someone who could cover for them. These arrangements continued even when spouses were permitted by the state to work. Some families still engaged in this type of network because it allows the couple to work and save the money for market-based care such as a crèche.

This role reconfiguration was particularly common in the period of partial reunification, especially when some of their children started living with the couple in

Ireland. The focus group discussions with husbands and nurse-wives revealed many instances of these strategies. Husbands who joined their nurse-wives in 2001 helped prepare other husbands for the reality of their roles in Ireland. One of the husbands in the FGD said that before coming to Ireland, he was told by his friend to be ready because *"sa Ireland, ang babae ang lalaki, ang lalaki ang babae"* (in Ireland the woman is the man, and the man is the woman), to which all the FGD participants agreed. Another FGD participant said that his friends in Ireland did not believe him when he told them he does not iron the clothes for his family (because he is terrible at it), suggesting that husbands ironing clothes is common in Ireland. The husbands have also ascribed gender to everyday household appliances. The FGD became animated when discussion veered into buying of household appliances. They said that nowadays when buying household appliances, the buyer must check to see whether the appliance label says "FOR HIM' or "FOR HER." They consider washing machine as unisex, but all the other appliances such as flat irons and vacuum cleaners and kitchen wares are checked for gender labels before purchasing.

Married female nurses in the FGD also acknowledged that it was their husbands who did most of the tasks in the household during this period. They added that if their husbands were employed, it would be the husbands who would have to resign from their jobs when a conflict in schedule in looking after the kids necessitated that one of them quit. The nurses are the main breadwinners with more permanent and higher paying jobs than their husbands. They said that "it doesn't matter if our husbands don't have jobs, as long as we have a job, because if we lose our jobs here, they're also going to be our dependents."

Household Division of Labor During Full Reunification: Ireland

If the spouse is still unemployed during full reunification, much of the division of labor in the household in Ireland follows the pattern for partial reunification in the previous section.

However, when both partners are employed, the division of labor is markedly different from that of the Philippines prior to the move (Table 6.1, column 6). Cooperation plays a big role in the division of tasks. Having learned a great deal of housework from their stints as "housebands", husbands readily take on the tasks needing to be done in their household.

Jason who said "I did everything!" when he was still totally dependent on his wife, when asked who did the tasks in the household most often now, he replied – "*Inyo lahat!"* This is a loaded word. In this context it means "both of us", but it also points to the necessity of cooperation between partners in Ireland because they cannot afford to hire outside help to do all or some of the household tasks, as they could in the Philippines.

In all forms of interview – individual, mini- and regular FGDs—it is common to hear statements similar to these from Martin and Sarge.

> "Whoever is free! Like in our case now that we both work full-time. My job is from Monday through Friday. So if my wife [nurse] is on-duty, when I arrive at home at 6 PM, I wash the feeding bottle, I cook dinner so that when my wife arrives at 8 PM, dinner is ready for her. Early in the morning, before going to work, I bring the kids to a child minder or to the crèche and pick them up in the afternoon on the way home. If she is off-duty, she does the household chores as well. She will do the laundry and wash the dishes. If I am off, I would do the same." – *Martin, husband of nurse*

> "Couples do not quarrel over household chores. They help each other. It's not a big deal." --*Sarge, husband of nurse*

Other couples made arrangements to invite a relative in the Philippines usually their mother or mother-in-law to "visit" Ireland primarily to provide short-term assistance in the household. This "visit" had quadruple benefits: a) gave the mother a chance to visit Ireland; b) showed the mother what their life is like in Ireland--that they really work hard for the money and to tell the people back home not to misspend the money; c) mother would look after the children while they are out for work; and d) mother would look after them as well, by preparing home-cooked meals throughout the day. When they wake up, breakfast is served and when they return from work, dinner is ready, and the house is kept tidy. The cost of the mother's visit is recouped by the amount of savings they accumulate from not having to pay for crèche and other child minding services while their "visitor" is in Ireland, and from the extra income brought in by the husband. Visitors can only spend a maximum of three months in Ireland, but the hosts are usually able to extend their visitors' stay for another three months by citing ill-health of the visitor or other health-related reasons when applying for extension.

III. Maintaining and Sustaining Ties: The Transnational Practices of Communication, Visits, and Remittances

The stability of transnational families is undergirded by practices that allow nurses and their family members "to be here and yet there." Reynolds and Zontini (2006:5) cite these activities as examples of a "*caring about"* form of family care which "encompasses contact and emotional support and refers to emotional function connected with sociability, advice, comfort, and self-validation. Examples of caring about activities include communication by telephone, letters, e-mails, visits, participation in family decision-making and financing the purchase of care." In this

section, I discuss how nurses and their families maintain and sustain their ties across borders through their transnational practices of communication, remittances and visits, and the factors that influence these practices.

Call, text, e-mail, and instant messenger

The most common form of communication used by nurses to maintain and sustain their ties in the Philippines in the early stages of the migration system and which continues up to the present time is by calling or texting.

Since long distance telephone communications is expensive, Filipino nurses and their families devised strategies to minimize the costs. When calling the Philippines especially for an extended period, they use phone cards because of their cheap per minute rates relative to the rates of Irish telephone companies. The most popular phone card used by Filipinos in 2000 was a seafarer's phone card which gave them more than an hour of talk time for five Irish pounds. This phone card was sold exclusively to members of the seafarers club. But as the information of the availability of such card spread even among nurses and other land-based Filipino workers, the phone card vendors eventually sold it to anyone interested. The demand for the seafarer's card eventually declined when Filipino grocery stores that carry different kinds of phone cards started to appear. Phone cards remain popular and are used for long conversations to relatives in the Philippines. Some phone cards like *Talktime* allow nurses to talk for 3.5 hours for €8. The same phone card would allow them to talk for up to 10 hours and 6 hours to relatives and friends in the U.S. and up to 6 hours to the U.K.

Most Filipinos nurses who arrived in Ireland in 2000 had mobile phones from the Philippines with international roaming. If a relative in the Philippines wanted to talk to them, they would alert the worker in Ireland by making a *drop call* to their

mobile phones. A *drop call* is when a person dials another person's mobile phone number then ends the call as soon as it rings. This has the effect of alerting the receiver as to whom they should call back, as it displays the name or the cell phone number of the person who called. There is no charge to this *drop call* strategy and is still being used to signal the nurse in Ireland to return call immediately. Nurses seldom use their roaming mobile phone to call back relatives in the Philippines because of the high roaming charges applied on calls to the Philippines. They typically use their Irish mobile phones or phone cards instead.

Text messaging is the most frequently used method of sending short messages to relatives in the Philippines and Ireland. It is common to see Filipinos in Ireland with at least two cell phones – one a roaming mobile phone from the Philippines, and another subscribed to an Irish phone company. When exchanging text messages, the relative in the Philippines would text the nurse's roaming cell phone because texting would cost them only U.S. $ 0.021 cents[27] (2 U.S. cents). The migrant nurse then replies also by text message from her Irish mobile phone account because it would cost her only $0.11[28] cents per text message. Nurses hardly use their roaming mobile phones from the Philippines to text back because it would cost them more --U.S.$1.03. When calling to the Philippines, they also use their Irish mobile phone because it is cheaper.

During the process of separation or partial reunification, calls to spouses and children were regular, ranging from daily to once a week, and of considerable length ranging from 15 minutes to an hour and sometimes longer. Because of the frequency of their calls, some Filipino nurses stacked up on phone cards buying in bulk (10 cards) to get a 10 percent discount. They thus get 10 phone cards for the price of nine.

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[27] At $1=Peso 48.00 exchange rate
[28] €1 = $1.25

The frequency of use of phone cards has helped build friendships and social capital with merchants who Filipinos contact when they ran out of phone cards. These merchants would dictate the access codes to the nurses over the phone and collect their payment the next time they buy groceries at the store. From frequent conversations with their friends and co-workers, nurses also know which among their friendship networks are likely to have phone cards whom they can call in the event they have used up all their phone cards.

The length of the conversation with their relatives in the Philippines is sometimes determined by the minutes remaining in the phone cards. They terminate the conversation when the phone card runs out, warning those at the other end of the line that they will extend their conversation until then. They do this not only to prolong their conversation, but to maximize the use of the phone cards because according to them, phone cards have connection fees and other charges.

Respondents mentioned that as the separation and partial reunification drags on, the frequency of telephoning typically becomes less frequent and the length of the conversation becomes shorter, ranging from 10-30 minutes. These were mostly attributed to both sides getting accustomed to the absence of the other and to the relative ease with which family members could contact each other. The improved economic condition of the family of the nurse in the Philippines enabled them to provide mobile phones to family members and purchase alternative forms of communication including subscription to internet service. Family members agree to call at any time for urgent or emergency matters, or whenever the need arises.

One of the disadvantages of phone and text messages is that they do not satisfy migrant workers' longing to see their loved ones in the Philippines while talking to them. It does not allow them to detect non-verbal cues such as frowns or smiles or other contextual cues such as the setting from which the person is talking. Every

phone call or text message sent through their phones incurs costs, and most do not have phones and phone plans that allow them to see their loved ones through their mobile phones. These limitations prompted many nurses to invest in computers with internet connections for themselves in Ireland and for their families in the Philippines. With Instant Messenger (IM), they are able to communicate with their families in the Philippines by voice, chat, and even via web camera for free. For those with web cameras, microphones, and speakers, they are also able to talk and see everyone at home all at once and not have to repeat the same conversation to each family member, which is another advantage of this technology. The only costs they incur are the monthly fees for the internet connection and the initial cost of buying the computers, which they say are also being used by their relatives for educational purposes.

With vast improvements in the telecommunications infrastructure in both countries, among those with internet access, IMs have become the primary means of communication across borders and has resulted in a substantial decline in their use of phone calls and text to communicate with relatives.

All the nurses I interviewed have e-mails and several IM accounts. The most popular IM accounts were Yahoo and Skype. They used these accounts not just to communicate with immediate family members, but with other relatives and friends as well. Many nurses have also signed up for social networking accounts such as Friendster, Facebook, and MySpace which also allowed them to reconnect with friends in elementary, high school, and college; neighbors, former co-workers, and other friends and relatives around the world. They said these tools nurtured relationships across vast distances and helped ease the pain and loneliness associated with transnational life.

Remittances in cash

Filipino nurses do not fail to send cash remittances to their families in the Philippines. They send more of their earnings to their families than they keep for themselves in Ireland, especially when their entire nuclear family is still in the Philippines. They have to rely on their budget management skills to retain enough money in their bank accounts in Ireland to support themselves and in anticipation of the costs that will be incurred to process the documents of family members who will later join them in Ireland. Notwithstanding, remittances sent by nurses to their families were usually more than 50 percent of their net income.

But, what enabled nurses to send such large amounts of their salary to the Philippines during the separation stage? The answers lie in the nurses' lifestyle in Ireland during the initial separation stage.

Prior to reunification, a married Filipino migrant nurse in Ireland usually shares accommodation with Filipino co-workers (although it should be noted that some of them do live with their Irish co-workers). Typically there are three or four of them renting a house or an apartment. Each one of them either has their own separate room or is sharing a room with someone else, and they share the cost of the rent. This type of living arrangement results in great savings. By sharing accommodation, nurses spend on average €300 a month on rent. Had they rented a separate apartment on their own in the Dublin area, they would have spent on average €1200 per month on rent. This translates to a savings of €900 per month on rent alone, which they then include in the remittance to the Philippines.

In addition, having no family member in Ireland to physically attend to during the separation stage, nurses are able to augment their income by banking (working overtime) at every opportunity presented to them. It is also common to find nurses doing agency work during their days off, while fully employed in another health

institution. They are allowed to do this as work visa holders. Nurses who recently arrived in Ireland who are Green Card holders do not have this right.

Other sources of remittances, which have significant implications for the impact-of-immigrants-on-the-economy debate, but have not been discussed in most remittance studies because those studies tend to focus on income as source of remittances, are Irish bank loans and credit cards. When substantial outlays are needed to purchase a property, finance a business, or for a family emergency, some nurses turn to Irish banks to loan the needed amount then send it to the Philippines. Nurses I interviewed found it very easy to acquire loans from Irish banks. They would see the money deposited in their bank accounts within two business days of filing a loan application. Others send almost all their income to the Philippines and live within what they have retained and used their credit cards when they have used up their cash. These practices have the effect of developing both economies – the Philippines through cash remittances, and Ireland through interest paid on loans and credit cards, as well as through migrant's engagement in the labor force.

During the separation stage, remittances are usually sent to and managed by the spouse. When the spouse joins the nurse in Ireland, as long as the children are still left behind in the Philippines, remittances are sent to and managed by a guardian, usually the mother of either spouse. This type of arrangement is particularly true when the children are, in the opinion of the parents, still not capable of managing the family's finances. When the children left behind are perceived by their OFW parents to have the maturity to handle the remittances, they become the financial managers of the family. The remittance is oftentimes sent to and managed by the eldest child, irrespective of gender. Financial management gets passed on to the next child only when the eldest child was found to have mismanaged the funds. This follows the

norm in traditional Filipino families where the eldest is expected to look after (or is responsible for) their younger siblings.

The amount of remittances sent during the partial reunification stage is minimally affected by the arrival of the spouse. Why remittances do not change during this state is due largely to the nurses' living arrangements. Most nurses do not leave the accommodation that they share with other nurses even when their spouse join them in Ireland. The nurse just asks for the housemates' permission for her spouse to live with them. Their housemates generally approve of these reconfigured arrangements. If the spouse joins a four-member housing unit, for example, it becomes a five-member housing unit and the rent is split evenly into five, with the married couple paying 40% of the rent. In some arrangements, the rent is still split into four, but the utilities are split into five. Thus, the nurse's usual savings for living in a shared accommodation is reduced with the arrival of the spouse. Other living expenses like food, clothing, and recreation increase with the arrival of the spouse (who is unemployed at this stage). Nonetheless, the couple still manages to remit a substantial part of the nurse's income to the Philippines. When the couple reaches a decision to reunify their family, they generally move out of their shared accommodation and rent a house on their own or that has an extra room that they can rent out to others. The costs of preparation e.g., renting a house, purchasing household essentials and other appliances, visa fees, transport, and other expenses—are taken out from their savings. The couple still remits the usual amount to their children, so they can maintain their lifestyle.

Once the families are fully reunited in Ireland remittances diminish significantly. The owner of one of the leading remittance centers in Ireland believed that the decline in the amount of remittances of fully reunited families is due to the

high cost of maintaining a household in Ireland[29]. At this point, remittances are mostly for members of the family of orientation, although some extended relatives also benefit. According to one key informant:

> "The nurses they have regular remittances to their parents, except those nurses with families who are here right now, they just help out. But, those who are building their homes in the Philippines, sending their siblings to school, helping their parents, the breadwinners, they are regular remitters. And they send big amounts!" -- *Jun Mercado, Europhil*

An agent of another leading remittance center in Ireland added that, for others, the amount of remittances increase when their spouses find jobs, and in such circumstances the purpose of the remittance evolves. Before reunification remittances are sent for the maintenance and sustenance of their family. With full reunification remittances are spent on investments in the Philippines, especially in real estate properties.

> "In the past the remittance concentration is for supporting the family. Now, since the entire family is here, the concentration is on investments such as properties and condominiums. They also send money if they are sending relatives to school or supporting their parents." – *Annaliza Carreon, Phish International*

Currently, the overall amount of remittances has declined as many nurses have mortgaged homes, and many have at least one car and are paying car loans in Ireland. In 2005, banks in Ireland aggressively offered housing loans for up to 100 percent of equity (i.e., the total amount of the house), which the nurses readily grabbed. These loans enabled them to purchase their own homes. Without that offer it would have taken them about four or five years to save and come up with their normal equity counterpart (usually eight percent of the cost of the house) when applying for a

[29] Finfacts Team (2009). "Economist Intelligence Unit Cost of Living Survey 2009: Dublin is world's 13th most expensive city; New York gets 23rd ranking and London 27th" March 10, 2009. http://www.finfacts.ie/irishfinancenews/article_1016156.shtml accessed March 23, 2010

housing loan in a bank. Older nurses, however, have difficulty getting a loan approval because they tend to be offered a shorter duration of payment by the banks because of their age, which means much higher amortization rates than younger nurses.

Many of these nurses with mortgaged homes bought houses that are close to their place of work. Home ownership has provided their stay in Ireland a semblance of stability and permanence. In some areas, an entire row of houses in a subdivision were all owned by Filipinos. Some nurses, however, decided to continue to rent, and not mortgage. This is due mainly to uncertainty about their future in Ireland, so they want to be portable if the situation requires them to leave. The recession in Ireland starting in 2007 has severely affected the housing market. Those with mortgaged homes saw the values of their houses plummet and their monthly amortization increase after their interest shifted from being fixed to variable. Because of this they cannot readily leave Ireland, even if they want to, at least for now.

Legal limits to remittance and why Irish-based banks and remittance centers are preferred channels of remittance

For the most part, the amount of money remitted by Filipinos did not exceed €3,000 a month. This is because of additional requirements of the Irish Financial Regulators as part of their anti-money laundering program. If an OFW remits €3,000 or more, they have to produce their passport (for name and date of birth), proof of address, residency status, bank account, and a statement about the source of the money to be transmitted (i.e., salary or other forms of income).

Recently, Filipinos have discovered that the Euro to Peso exchange rate in Ireland is higher than in the Philippines. Thus, when they plan to visit the Philippines they remit money to their bank accounts in the Philippines just before they leave

Ireland, rather than bring the Euros with them physically in the Philippines. This also helps avoid the risk of losing their wallet in the Philippines.

What are remittances for and for whom, and what are the motives behind it? Remittances are used in a variety of ways. They are used to pay for living expenses -- food, clothing, bills, maintenance medicines, allowance for spouse and children, and other miscellaneous expenses; for school tuition of children, nephews, nieces, siblings, cousins, or a sponsored child; for some once-yearly events such as fiestas, birthdays and Christmas; and for big projects or investments such as the renovation of house, the purchase of lot or house or both; huge loans to relatives; and other big money investments. The main beneficiaries of remittances are usually the members of families of pro-creation and orientation, but can often be stretched to extended relatives and non-relatives, such as a sponsored child.

Nurses send money precisely because the main reason they worked abroad was to be able to help their family financially. Normative expectations and obligations play an important role in insuring that the nurse will be true to the promise she made to her family before migrating to Ireland. It was also common to hear the nurses say that the reason they remit is because it is inherent in the cultural trait of the Filipino people: "It is part of our culture." "That's how we are." "It is in our nature." "We send money to our relatives who are in need."

However, as I probed deeper into their motives for sending remittances for big investments that benefit their close or extended relatives, for some the underlying reason for the support was to improve the recipients' lives to make them self-sufficient, so that they wouldn't have to rely on them all the time.

> "My brother asked for money so he could start an internet café business. Initially I bought 10 computers, but it turned out it wasn't enough, so I added 10 more, and then added 7 more. Right now there are 27 computers in his internet café. The business is thriving, so when I go home he has money to spend for me. I do not have to take out my wallet when I am there."— *Vivian, married nurse*

Some loaned their relatives huge sums to keep them off their backs for a long while.

> "My brother borrowed 100,000 pesos from me. He wanted to start a business. To help him out, I lent him the amount he requested. I really don't expect him to be able to pay the loan, *lista sa hangin*[30]*!*. But that should keep him from asking money from me for a long while." *Jessa, married, nurse.*

All the nurses I interviewed are currently investing or at some point in the past had invested in the human capital of close or extended relatives. They contributed to the education of their nieces, nephews, and even cousins. They usually paid for their full tuition, but most stopped short of giving full scholarship i.e., including the allowance, books, and uniforms of their beneficiaries. Although they could afford to give full scholarship, they reasoned that they did not want to take away all the responsibilities from the parents. Some of them were approached by relatives to help with the education of their child(ren), but most of them did not put their relatives in a position to ask for help. Most initiated the offer to help in sending their relatives' child(ren) to school. When queried for their motives they revealed that it makes them feel good to be able to help, and also to give the child(ren) a good education so they can find a good job and in turn help send their younger siblings to school, and/or help their parents out in the future.

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[30] *Lista sa hangin* literally means "listed in the wind", but figuratively, it means there is no written contract, the debt is payable when able, and the lender is indifferent as to whether the debt is repaid or not. The debt is considered a help to the debtor, but the debtor doesn't know it.

Remittances in kind

There are two forms of in-kind remittances – the *padala* (a present one sends home through a returning migrant) and *balikbayan* (homecomers) box.

It is common practice for Filipinos in Ireland to send gifts in kind to relatives in the Philippines. Whenever they learned of a friend who was going home to the Philippines they would send presents for their families through them. The present may be cash but it could also be anything such as a greeting card, perfume, shoes, etc.[31] Prior to the departure of the returning migration for the Philippines, arrangements have been made as to how and by whom the gift will be picked up. If the recipient lives a considerable distance away from the returning migrant's home, money to cover mailing costs inside the Philippines will also be provided by the sender. Despite limitations imposed by airline carrier's luggage weight limits (20 kilos), the returning migrant would leave room for the *padala* of friends (about 5 kilos).

Another form of remittance in kind is the *balikbayan* (homecomers) box which is offered by freight forwarders. This form of remittance is a very popular method of bulk gift-giving used by Filipinos because they can put anything they want in a box without any weight restrictions. The dimension of the box which is about 65 linear inches puts restrictions on what and how many to send. Although Philippine customs require the sender to itemize the contents of the box, it is hardly a hindrance as the boxes are rarely checked thoroughly. *Balikbayan* boxes are delivered door-to-door and takes about 45 to 70 days to reach the recipient.

It is also through balikbayan boxes that Filipino workers in Ireland are able to give homecoming gifts to relatives and friends. Customarily, when a Filipino goes

[31] Even important documents that needed the signature of a relative in the Philippines may be sent through a returning migrant.

home for a visit to the Philippines, it is a common practice for them to bring presents (*"pasalubong"*) bought in Ireland. Ireland's airline policy, however, limits their baggage allowance to only 20 kilos (44 lbs.) With almost every relative and friend expecting a present from the returning migrant, it is practically impossible to fit all these in a check-in luggage. Some Filipinos, thus send *Balikbayan* boxes containing their gifts months in advance of their scheduled trip to time it to arrive just a few days before or after their arrival in the Philippines.

The owner of the leading Filipino-owned freight forwarding company in Ireland observed that those who recently arrived in Ireland were usually those who send the most boxes. The longer they are in Ireland the less often they send boxes, especially if their families had been fully reunified in Ireland. Reunified families send *balikbayan* boxes rarely or only when they have a scheduled trip to the Philippines.

The same freight forwarder mentioned that the peak months for *balikbayan* boxes are August, September, October, to ensure that their gifts to their relatives and friends reach them before or in time for Christmas. Quite a number of Filipinos also send *balikbayan* boxes from November to April, but not as many as those during August, September and October. Adding to the increase in shipment in August is the start of the summer sale in Ireland, where dresses fit for the year-round summer weather in the Philippines are on sale. The leanest months are May, June, July when cash remittances rather than in-kind remittances are sent for children's tuition and education-related expenses. June is usually the start of classes and enrolment period starts usually May or early June. Thus, the highs and lows of cash and kind remittances alternate and depend on the season.

For some nurses the cost of sending *balikbayan* boxes, which is between €160 to €200 per box, is prohibitive. This discourages a lot of them. Others just try it once and never do so again. Instead many buy their presents in the Philippines, when they

go on vacation there, as some of the products that can be purchased in Ireland have become available in the Philippines. In a way, globalization has thus altered the remittances of in-kind gifts by making available in the Philippines products that could only be bought in Ireland in the past.

Visits

Return migration, whether permanent or for short-term visits, plays an important role in the migration process as return migrants usually become agents of change not only through their economic remittances, but also through their social remittances i.e., ideas, behaviors, identities, and social capital that they bring home with them from the host country (Levitt, 1998). These social remittances expose the origin community to the living condition in the host country and encourage others to migrate. The return visits, accompanied by economic and social remittances, present the appearance of success that inspires others to migrate.

The peak travel periods for Filipinos according to the Filipino travel agent I interviewed were:

a) December, especially December 10-23, because they wanted to spend the Christmas holidays with their family;

b) July and August, which are the school holiday season in Ireland. Most of those who travel to the Philippines during this period are those with children, because that is the only time they can travel with their children. There are strict child welfare policies in Ireland that penalize the parents if their children have been absent from school. Some Filipino nannies also go on vacation to the Philippines during this period; and

c) March, which is graduation period in the Philippines. Migrant workers often go home time to attend the graduation of their children.

Visits are made to witness important milestones in family member's lives such as anniversaries, graduations, and birthdays; or to celebrate important holidays with the family. These visits serve to assure all family members that they are always valued and loved. Bonding with the family is the most common term used by nurses when asked what they do during their visits. Those who left their children while they were infants, however, often have a tougher time bonding with their children:

> "When I returned to the Philippines, my child did not recognize me. He was tentative to me. So, I made sure that we are always together so he will get to know me. I really spent time bonding with him. We went out together, eat out, went to the beach… By the time he started to become comfortable with me, it was time for me to go. I cried a bucket of tears!!!" *– Nica, married, female nurse*

Visits also happen when family crises arise such as an illness, or death in the family, or when children behave badly and need personal attention in the Philippines. Visits often include discussions of future family projects or investments, and allow return migrants to personally see the progress of on-going projects, or to supervise the purchase of new household assets such as a vehicle, furniture, or household appliances. Respondents may take their families on vacation to known tourist spots in the Philippines during their visits.

News of impending visits of migrants is often broadcast to friends or neighbors in the Philippines, usually not by the visiting migrant, but their proud relatives at home. Thus, when they come home they usually have meetings/outings with former colleagues already scheduled. These gatherings usually lead to discussions about life in Ireland and how to get there.

Visits to the Philippines are made possible by the generous leave entitlements in Ireland and smart scheduling on the part of Filipino nurses. The number of times they can travel to the Philippines in a year, however, depends on their employers, and also on the cost of the airfare.

Nurses' annual leave entitlement varies by years of experience. Those with 0-4 years experience get 24 days annual leave, 5-9 years experience get 25 days, while those with 10 or more years of experience get 27 days. These are working days and, therefore, exclude Saturdays and Sundays. So when converted into weeks, a staff nurse with 10 or more years of experience, for example, is entitled to five weeks plus two days of annual leave per year.

Nurses, however, are able to extend their vacation for one more week by scheduling seven straight night schedules before leaving for the Philippines. Working seven straight night shifts entitles them to seven days off the following week. Thus, they spend their week-off in the Philippines plus their five weeks leave entitlements, bringing the total to six weeks of vacation

Nurses can even extend their vacation for two more weeks by taking two vacations to the Philippines each year and splitting their leave entitlements. So, for a staff nurse with more than 10 years of experience, they will use only 13 days of their 27 days entitlement for their first vacation and start the vacation on the first day of their week off following their seven straight night shifts. They will do the same for the second trip. However, their ability to make two trips to the Philippines would depend on whether their employer would allow them to go away twice in a year. Employers honor the nurses' annual leave entitlements, but some do not allow their nurses to split their entitlements in order to make two trips.

Prior to family reunification nurses usually take one or two vacations to the Philippines each year. However, as family members are added to their household in Ireland, the frequency of their vacation to the Philippines diminishes because of the high cost of travel for the entire household. Some of them instead go on vacations in Italy, France, and other European countries, and even to the United States because the costs of travel to those locations are much cheaper than traveling to the Philippines.

According to the Filipino travel agent I interviewed in Ireland, 90 percent of his clients go on vacation to the Philippines. Of those, a great majority stay in the Philippines for five weeks to maximize their vacation and also because they find the flights to and from the Philippines to be long and tiring – a total of 17 hours flying time (excluding layovers). However, there are some (mostly unmarried nurses) who just spend two weeks in the Philippines, then spend the remainder of vacation time in other countries, usually in Europe. Married nurses with most, if not all, family members reunited in Ireland, often find going home to the Philippines for vacation expensive. Instead, they go on vacation to countries in Europe. The most popular spots are Rome and other destinations in Italy where they usually spend an entire week. Countries in Europe attract Filipinos in Ireland because they only have to secure a Schengen visa to visit most European countries (except the U.K.) and the fares within Europe are affordable. U.K., though closest to Ireland, is not as popular because it requires a separate visa, but this changes once nurses gain Irish citizenship.

Summary and Discussion

Family reunification process

The various trajectories of family reunification indicate that it is a non-linear process. Both its pace and trajectories are sensitive to the social, economic and policy context, as well as the life-cycle context of the immigrants and their families. With the slowdown of the economy beginning in 2007, family reunification became the main driving force growing the system, replacing labor migration, which was the growth engine in the early part of the 21st century.

The faster the family is reunited the better it is for the family. However Irish state policies on spousal work entitlement, high tuition cost for non-EEA nationals, and documentary requirements have contributed directly to delay the reunification

process. Other factors that delayed reunification included the cost of reunification, amenities at the location of place of work or residence of the nurse, refusal of family member to join, and involvement in extra-marital affairs in Ireland or at home.

What hastened family reunification relates more to the family context: finding a job for the spouse, jealousy or fear of extra-marital affairs, family crisis, and child support provided by the state.

Families get de-reunified or some members returned to the Philippines because the spouse was unsuccessful in finding work, high tuition cost of college education for non-EEA nationals in Ireland, the age of children (because some toddlers and newborns are brought to the Philippines to be cared for by relatives), and child behavior (e.g., problem child being sent home to the Philippines).

Family reunification outcomes also vary depending on the type of visa (whether green card, work permit, or visa), status of spouse's occupation or business in the Philippines (successful or not), age (newborn, toddler, or not), and enrolment status of children.

Although family reunification has multiple trajectories, husbands are generally the first to join the nurses in Ireland, and therefore many children have been exposed to situations in which both parents were absent.

A reconfigured household

The experiences of the transnational families of married female Filipino nurses clearly showed a reconfiguration of roles in the household division of labor resulting from nurse-wife's migration. The division of labor in the household prior to the migration of nurses is characterized by gendered division of labor where most of the household tasks are often done by the mother – the nurse, with some assistance from teenage daughters.

The departure of the nurses reconfigured the roles of the other members of the household. Left-behind husbands who were able to hire maids were able to escape much of the role reconfiguration, as they delegated the task to the helpers. However, for most men, hiring a domestic helper was not possible. Having a live-in maid while the wife is thousands of miles away is a recipe for neighborhood gossip and temptation. Thus, the couples negotiated, and this led men to actually give up their careers and do full-time "houseband" work. As a full-time "houseband", they did most of the household work and child minding. This seems to contradict Parreñas (2005) finding that in migrant mothers' households the fathers still did not do much of the caring work in the household. With the wife away, daughters also stepped up. Their duties were elevated as they, on some occasions, took the lead in cooking, meal preparation, and other household tasks.

The couple's initial reunification in Ireland was usually on a trial basis, because the husband was not permitted to work by the Irish State (before March 2004). During this stage the husband was totally dependent on his nurse-wife until he could secure his own work permit. While unemployed, his household labor (he did all the household tasks) served as his contribution to the household. Many, however, took risks by taking on jobs on cash-basis so they could help financially in the household. Being the child minder in the household, several "housebands" banded together and devised a rotating child minding arrangement so that every member of the group would have his turn at looking after the other members' child(ren) while the rest engaged in their cash-basis only jobs. Some of those who were unsuccessful in finding a job in Ireland returned to the Philippines, therefore, de-reunifying the family. Many then returned when Ireland reversed its policy and permitted spouses to work.

As families move from partial to full reunification, and the husband was finally permitted by the state to work, the division of labor in the household took a different

form from what it once was in the Philippines. The new arrangement is characterized by partnership and cooperation as both spouses share the tasks of maintaining the household.

The findings in this chapter provide us with a different perspective on transnational families of female migrant workers who are professionals. The dual burden of work in the office and the home commonly experienced by many nurse-wives in the Philippines prior to the move is often not reproduced, but rather reconfigured, in Ireland. The former model has been replaced by a cooperative relationship in the management of the household, in which men assume much of the household work that was once considered the sole domain of women.

With the feminization of migration, the Philippines society is also gradually changing its view about the role of men in the household, with the growing acceptability of the "housebands." The household remains the principal institution for the socialization of young children in the Philippines. As children grow in households characterized by a non-traditional household division of labor, with males (e.g. the father) sharing equal, if not more, responsibility for reproductive work, this socialization is likely to help change how future generations view gendered norms in the household. Clearly, migration has contributed significantly to the changes in social structures and cultural views of Filipinos.

The Irish state should also be credited for this shift in the household division of labor -- an unintended consequence of its policies. Ireland's policy of nearly four years of denying work entitlements to spouses of migrant workers prolonged the exposure of husbands to domestic work. Further, the competition for jobs that resulted from the ready welcome into the labor market of citizens from EU 10 accession states made it difficult for spouses of Filipino migrant workers to find employment even when they were granted permission to work in Ireland. Strict implementation of child

care policies have led many husbands to do much of the household work in Ireland, as leaving a child under twelve years old for more than 30 minutes is considered a form of child neglect.

The examination of transnational families of professional nurses has also shown that the global care chain does not always apply to families of professional care workers. During the full separation stage, husbands of nurses gave up their careers to devote full-time care work to their children, rather than hire a maid. The chain only gets established during the partial reunification stage when husbands join their wives and temporarily leave the children under the care of a guardian, or their eldest child. The non-existence of this chain during the full separation stage was made possible by the following: a) significantly high income of the nurse-wife which made it easier for the couple to choose the job resignation of the husband; b) while the wife's income would allow for paid helpers, it is a cultural taboo for a husband to live with a maid while the nurse-wife is working abroad; and c) a culture of migration that has led to the growing acceptability of the "housebands."

The couple's decision for the husband to give up his job or career also challenged the notion that migration is a household strategy to minimize risk (new economics of migration). While the decision to migrate is nearly always a household strategy to maximize income, it may increase risk when the couple decides to put all eggs in the nurses' basket. Market risks may not be a factor for nurses because there is a demand for their services, but there are other risks that can potentially affect their income and risk strategies—failing the assessment test, accident, illness, or malpractice.

The study has also shown the perils of prolonged separation – it seemed to be gnawing away at the value of family unity. As family members become used to being separated from one another they often look past the importance of family unity when

they decide on issues that reunify or de-reunify their families. Examples include the lack of excitement of some children to reunite with their parents, and parents sending their newborns back to the Philippines because their care prevents the couple from working full-time. This affects parent-child relationship down the road, especially difficulties in bonding either due to geographic distance or the shortness of visits.

Maintaining and Sustaining Ties

To counter some of the downsides of separation, Filipinos are able to communicate frequently and at both ends of the migration system, and they are constantly looking for ways to lower the costs of doing so. In the Philippines, to reduce their cost of communication, Filipinos bound for Ireland often purchase a phone and have its international roaming option activated. This allows relatives in the Philippines to communicate with the migrant worker for free via *drop call* or to be charged the same amount as in the Philippines for a text message.

Mobile phone companies have caught up with the needs of migrant workers and their families and have developed phones with dual SIMM technology. With this technology the SIMM of their international roaming phone from the Philippines, and the one in Ireland, can both be installed in one phone.

Filipinos keep themselves abreast of the latest communications technology such as dual-SIMM technology phones, and they have been upgrading to a more computer-based methods of communication via the internet using various types of instant messenger accounts, such as Yahoo Messenger, MSN Messenger, and Skype. The latter is the most popular. These technologies or software packages are used as long as they are not prohibitively expensive and whenever the communications infrastructure at both ends of the globe allows.

The rising popularity of instant messengers, such as Skype, is attributed to its distinct advantages over telephoning technology. While in both technologies one could sense verbal cues, in the former non-verbal and partial contextual cues are also detectable. Unlike actual visits where a three-dimensional context is possible where one can see the entire surrounding environment, in instant messenger with video capabilities the view is limited only to the frame captured by the web camera. Still, seeing and hearing relatives in real-time is a big draw for preferring this technology over telephoning.

Filipinos are also able to communicate with relatives when they run out of phone cards to use. The friendship networks they build, and the relationships they have developed with distributors of the phone cards, allow them to contact network members in case of emergency. It is not unexpected, due to the norms of reciprocity, that friends would lend friends an unused phone card. What may be more unusual, however, is the relationship Filipinos have developed with phone card distributors, who basically give them an open line of credit, dictating the code of the phone card over the phone, and allowing them to pay when they next meet. These phone card distributors are usually ethnic Filipinos who have established businesses in Ireland. This “favor” is also a good strategy for them to build and maintain a client base.

The motivations cited by the nurses for sending remittances to the Philippines are revealing. Social capital in the form of mutual expectations and obligations that inhere in family or kinship ties help explain why they remit money to the Philippines. As Bourdieu (1986) and Putnam (2000) have noted, these expectations and obligations developed over years of interaction among family members. Portes (1995) added, however, that it is the ability to mobilize these resources (expectations and obligations) that is considered social capital. None of these resources, however, can

be mobilized without the presence of infrastructures that allow for transboundary exchanges to take place, such as remittance centers.

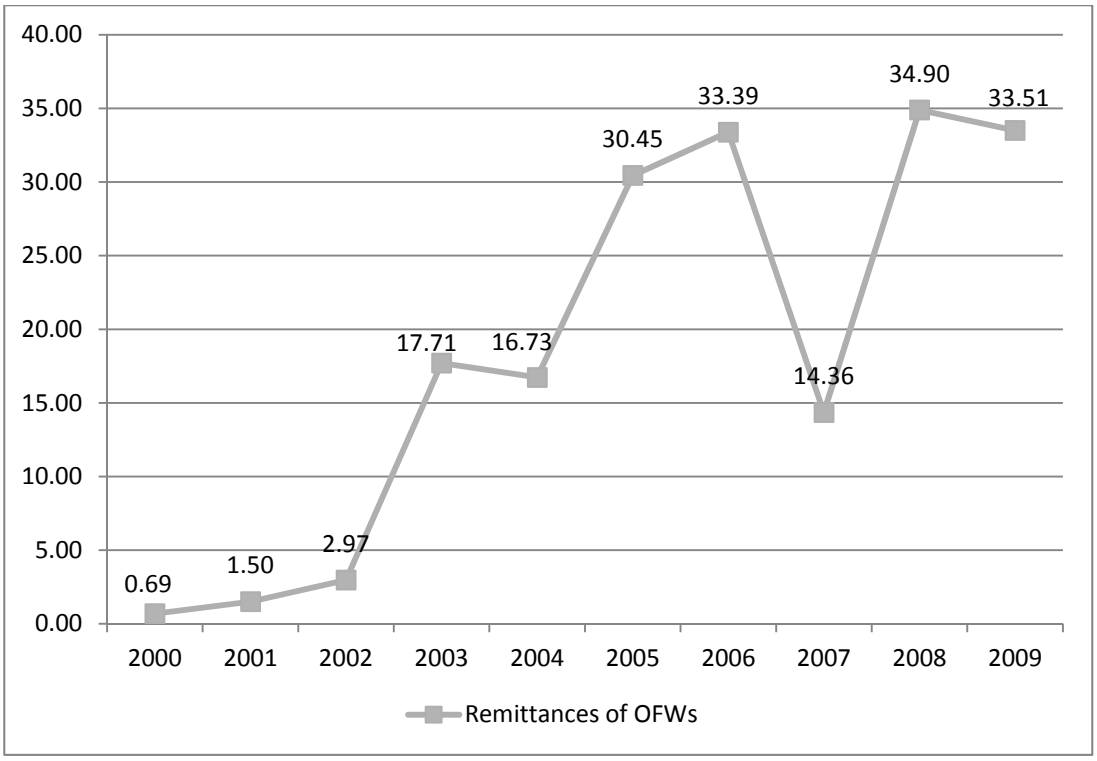
Nurses cited the need to help their families financially as their main reason for migrating to Ireland and their family or kinship networks expect them to follow through, hence the remittance. There is also the satisfaction of helping people. For some nurses, however, the motivation is double-sided – they are fulfilling what is expected of them or their obligations, while at the same time they are motivated by pure self-interest masquerading as pure altruism. This can be hard to detect unless one delves more deeply than is often done. The examples cited above showed that they fulfilled what their relatives expected them to do – help; but they often did so for pure self-interest i.e., to get relatives off their backs for a while or to make them self-sufficient so that they would not continue to ask for money. From the perspective of the remittance receiver, however, help was often seen as pure altruism – their relatives are good people for lending them money to start their business.

Cash remittances are very much affected by family reunification status. Cash remittances are substantial during the separation stage oftentimes amounting to more than half of migrant's net income. This is made possible through savings strategies that include staying in a shared accommodation, banking (working overtime) at every opportunity, and engaging in agency work on top of their regular work. Living arrangements are a plausible explanation as to why Filipinos living alone in the U.S. send less home i.e., because they often have to pay for their living arrangements on their own (Cavijner et. al., 1998). In addition to income derived from work, which studies on remittance behavior often cite as the sole or primary source of cash remittance (Cavijner, et al, 1998; Maggard, 2004), Filipinos in Ireland have an additional remittance source. Ireland has a very aggressive banking system that provides access to capital through personal loans to qualified Filipinos (mostly

professionals), which they can use for any purpose. Many Filipinos apply for these loans to finance personal/family projects or to purchase properties in the Philippines.

When family members started relocating to Ireland, remittances gradually diminished, as they started to rent or purchase their own homes. If only the spouse rejoins, remittance is minimally affected because the move does not necessitate their renting a place on their own. It becomes necessary only when children arrive. Figure 6.2 clearly shows a remittance decline in 2004, which coincided with the period when spouses of professionals were permitted to work, and an extreme plunge in remittances in 2007, which coincided with a) the period in which spouses of low-skilled professionals were permitted to work; b) the waiving of the family income requirement for reunification for those who had worked in Ireland for at least three years; and c) the start of the financial crisis. This substantial decline in remittances most likely occurred because transplanting the family requires tremendous start-up costs, such as renting or mortgaging a home, buying appliances and kitchen wares, paying for visa documents processing costs, and purchasing plane tickets.

The presence of a *balikbayan* box service provider is a big factor in enabling Filipinos to send to the Philippines bulk cargo that has no weight restrictions at a reasonable cost. Without this type of courier service, the cost would have been prohibitive, i.e., if goods were sent via known international couriers like Federal Express and United Parcel Service. Like cash remittances, remittances in kind (*balikbayan* boxes*)* are most often patronized by those who recently arrived in Ireland. However, the frequency of sending *balikbayan* boxes diminishes with duration of residence in Ireland, especially with the reunification of families. Reunited families rarely send *balikbayan* boxes, except when they have a scheduled trip to the Philippines.



Source: Foreign Trade Statistics Section
Industry and Trade Statistics Department
National Statistics Office
Republic of the Philippines

Figure 6.2 Remittances of Filipinos in Ireland (in US$ million): 2000-2009

Short-term visits to the Philippines were made possible by generous leave entitlements in Ireland. However, the timing of visits depends on holidays, events in the Philippines, and the education status of children in Ireland and the Philippines. Those with young children going to school in Ireland can only go on vacation when school is out for the summer because of Ireland's strict policy regarding schooling of children. Those with older kids graduating in the Philippines go home during graduation period. The frequency of visits is also subject to the employer's policy. Leave entitlements are honored, but the timing and frequency of their use has to be discussed with the employer. The considerable distance also affects the duration of

the visit taken by nurses in Ireland. The majority of travelers take all five weeks of their leave in the Philippines at one time because of the 17-hour flight that separates the two countries.

What the nurses do once in the Philippines has significant impact on the community where they reside, especially if their arrival has been broadcast there. They impart what Levitt (1998) called social remittances -- ideas, behaviors, and identities. Common examples relate to the terms used and changes in the behavior of the nurses, which they transfer to relatives and friends in the Philippines, include use of the term *loo* instead of toilet, *grand* in lieu of great, preference of football over basketball (which is considered the national past time of the Philippines), and drinking tea instead of coffee. Social remittances also contribute to the propagation of the culture of migration. Nurses who have worked abroad and returned to the Philippines for short visits were often seen as successful because they wear designer clothes, bags and jewelry when going out, and they purchase properties and major appliances. They usually spend money, lots of it, during their visits and often treat relatives and friends to lunch or dinner. Their outward appearance and actions encourage others to migrate.

Chapter 7

The Evolution of Filipino Infrastructures in Ireland

Transnational life would not be possible without the presence of Filipino infrastructures that facilitate transnational practices of nurses or that keep the Filipino culture alive in Ireland. In this chapter, I examine the evolution and function of ethnic Filipino businesses, hometown and host-town associations, and other support infrastructures. But, first I discuss the living conditions of pioneer Filipino nurses when they first arrived in Ireland, to get a sense of how they lived before the establishment of these infrastructures.

I. Understanding the living condition of pioneer migrant nurses

Filipino nurses who arrived in 2000 found themselves without any Filipino support infrastructure or institutions that would help them transition to their new environment or engage in trans-boundary exchanges with the Philippines. Although a Philippine Consulate was already in place, it did not offer these types of services. The Filipino population was so small back then that a permanent mission was not needed. The Honorary Consul, John Ferris, is married to a Filipina and lived at the Consulate at that time. According to him, "back then there was not much to do." However, when Filipinos started arriving by the hundreds in June of 2000, the demand for consular services started to increase. Although the Consul's home could accommodate Filipinos seeking consular services, its location was quite far off the City Center and was not easily accessible. He moved his Consul's Clinic to the Busaras (Bus Station) in Dublin, then later transferred to *Supermacs*, a fast food chain at O'Connell Street in September 2000. In both places he was "thrown out" because his Clinic was causing traffic congestion. In 2001 he moved the Consul's Clinic to the Teacher's Club at 36 Parnell Square where he rented a room every Wednesday and

Saturday afternoon until evening. This became the location of the Consul's Clinic from 2001 until July 2009. At that point he was replaced by the First Filipino Ambassador with the opening of the Philippine Embassy in Ireland on July 9, 2009. John Ferris had served as Honorary Consul for slightly over 18 years (1990- July 2009).

For the nurse pioneers, their employers and/or recruiters provided their initial support structure in Ireland. Upon arrival they were met at the airport either by a representative of the recruitment agency or their employers. They then proceeded to the accommodations that were either owned by their employers or rented by them for their temporary use. Some employers provided free accommodation for six weeks (the duration of the period of assessment), while others gave an initial housing allowance. Most employers also advanced part of their salary upon arrival to enable them to purchase what they needed, as part of their adjustment, in their new environment.

The initial accommodation of Filipino nurses varied. They were housed in apartments, hostels, training facilities, retreat centers, employer-owned housing, or in rooms within the work facility. Apart from accommodation, pioneer nurses were provided orientation by their recruiters upon arrival in Ireland. Because the recruiters and employers were also new to the business of recruiting Filipino nurses into Ireland, the orientation they provided was incomplete. They focused specifically on how to set up bank accounts, where to get their PPSN, where to get their uniforms. They were likewise given an overview about the Irish culture and locations of places of worship. The Filipino nurses typically have basic, social, cultural, and spiritual needs, which neither the employers nor the recruitment agencies could address, however. Without an existing Filipino infrastructure in Ireland, nurse pioneers struggled in several ways:

1. Looking for places to buy Philippine food products, cooking ingredients and utensils that they could use to cook Filipino food that they crave.
2. Finding stores to buy phone cards. One of the first things the nurses did when they arrived in Ireland was to find ways to inform their families in the Philippines that they have arrived safely. Searching for the phone card with the cheapest per minute rate was vital, especially during their first few weeks when the absence of loved ones was most felt, especially by those who were working abroad for the first time.
3. Finding places for worship, especially for non-Catholic Christians. Recruiters and employers had no problem with recommending churches to Catholics, but for other Christians they had to look around for a church that shared their core teachings and beliefs (or at least the important parts of it).
4. Looking for establishments to remit money and/or send in-kind remittances (*balikbayan* boxes).

For their safety and confidence Filipino nurses usually went in groups when searching for places where they could buy rice, ingredients, and cheap phone cards; or the fastest, cheapest, and most reliable way to send money; or a church. Each new discovery made by the pioneers was quickly diffused to their fellow nurses. The information was also relayed to the recruiters or employers who in turn incorporated it into their orientation packets for succeeding cohort of nurses. Subsequent arrivals thus had an easier adjustment period as they had information about where to purchase or obtain these necessities.

A popular place to purchase phone cards was the Stella Maris Seafarers' Club situated between the Busaras (bus station), Customs House, and Irish Life Center. For the purchase of rice cooker/steamer the Argos store was the place to go to. For rice and other ingredients for Asian cooking there was Asia Market on Drury St.,

Dublin. For remittances, they used Western Union or bank-to-bank transfers. Western Union (WU) was the choice of many because at that time it would take only 45 minutes to transfer their money to their accounts in the Philippines. Bank-to-bank transfers would take a week. The transaction cost of WU, though slightly higher than bank-to-bank, was preferred because of the urgency of the financial needs of families at home. In addition, the speed of the transmittal of WU reduced the migrant workers' anxiety over whether or not the money was received by the intended recipients. Even with the obvious need of these workers, it took a little over a year (late 2001) for businesses catering primarily to Filipinos to be established.

II. Evolution of ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland

As the number of Filipinos rose, the demand for food products from the Philippines, ingredients to prepare Filipino dishes, Filipino hospitality in services, and demand for cheaper ways to communicate and send remittances (cash or kind), led to the rise of Filipino infrastructures. In 2000, a Filipino fine dining restaurant and a hair salon opened, although more of its clientele were non-Filipinos. These were followed by the establishment of Filipino grocery stores in 2001, 2003, and 2004. Each one of these stores sells phone cards and has a remittance service either operated by the owner or by someone renting a space in the store. Also in 2001, the hair salon branched out at Dublin's City Center to be closer to the Filipinos, and the first *balikbayan* (homecomers) box service provider, a courier service, began its operations.

In the sections that follow, I relate the origins of these pioneering ethnic Filipino businesses taken from the verbal accounts of the owners and/or managers of the first Filipino hair salon, first two Filipino restaurants, first two Filipino grocery stores, first *Balikbayan* box service provider in Ireland, and other businesses and Philippine government programs and policies that encourage transnational practices.

Christopher David Hair Salon

Christopher David Hair Salon is the first Filipino Hair Salon in Ireland. It is located in Capel Street and is owned by a Irish-Filipino couple (the husband is Irish, while the wife is Filipino), who also owns a recruitment agency. The Filipino wife established the hair salon in July 2000 because she had difficulty explaining to Irish hairstylists what she wanted and was quite unsatisfied with the service she got. She said that there were some instances when she would cover her head for weeks because she was not happy with the work done to her. She compared the gay hairstylists back in her hometown whom she thought were really skillful. A recruiter herself, she decided to open up her own hair salon and recruit hairstylists from her hometown. The migrant hairstylists were themselves popular and had regular clients in their town. Two hairstylists had their own hair salon in the Philippines.

Christopher David first opened in Ballsbridge, Dublin with two *"lady-boys"* hairstylists (as they are called in Ireland). It took at least three months from its inception for the salon to take off. Prior to its opening and during its first three months, the two *lady-boys* embarked on an intensive advertising campaign. During their days-off they handed out flyers to every Filipino they met and in places where Filipinos generally congregated. At Stella Maris Seafarer's Club, for example, the line was so long that that it was sometimes mistaken for a queue for the bus, being close to the Busaras (bus station). Another location was Supermacs, a fast food restaurant at O'Connell St. that is popular among Filipinos. While handing out flyers, they were buoyed by the positive reception from Filipinos upon learning that a Filipino hair salon was opening.

Just three months into its operation, Christopher David became popular owing to several factors – the charisma of the *lady-boys*, its location, the patronage of both Irish and Filipino customers, and very satisfied customers spread by word of mouth.

Word of mouth advertising was particularly important in expanding Christopher David's customer base. Nurses in particular would bring their Indian colleagues to the salon or give them the contact information of the salon. The Ballsbridge location, being an Embassy row attracted many Irish customers. Filipinos actually found the Ballsbridge location not as accessible as they had hoped, but they continued to patronize the salon anyway. Since the owner of the salon also recruited hundreds of Filipinos from her hometown or nearby towns where the hairstylists originated, many of Christopher David's clients in Ireland were actually their regular customers back in the Philippines. This is one of the unique features of this migration system – this social space (hair salon, and their hairstylists and regular patrons) was transplanted thousands of miles away across vast oceans.

The popularity of the hair salon encouraged the owners to open a branch at the City Center. Although Ballsbridge is a good location because most embassies and diplomatic residences are located there, it is not easily accessible to the salon's intended market - Filipinos. The owners then decided to open another branch at the City Center in September 2002 and recruited directly from the Philippines two new *lady-boys* who were recommended by the other two stylists already working at the Ballsbridge Branch. However, the number of Filipino clients at Ballsbridge diminished considerably with the opening of the branch at the city center. Filipinos preferred the city center branch over Ballsbridge since they could do other errands or activities before or after heading for the salon – such as watch movies, shop at the mall, or do their groceries. It was also very accessible and convenient for those coming from outside Dublin as they did not have to ride another bus that would take them to Ballsbridge. With fewer Filipino clients and the elevated rent at the Ballsbridge branch, the owners decided to close it and transferred its two *lady-boys* to the city center branch on Capel St.

Bahay Kubo Restaurant

Bahay Kubo restaurant holds the distinction of being the first Filipino restaurant in Dublin. Owned by a Filipino-Irish couple (the husband is Filipino and the wife is Irish), this fine dining restaurant was established in 2000. The couple started *Bahay Kubo* to showcase Filipino cuisine, and they targeted mainly the young professionals with more disposable income, especially during the peak years of the Celtic Tiger. Their clientele are mostly Irish on corporate night-outs. Filipinos comprise only between 5-8 percent of their customers. When Filipinos do dine there, they are usually in groups, mostly nurses or their families, and oftentimes to celebrate a special occasion such as birthdays, christenings, or first birthday.

Bahay Kubo restaurant is located at Bath Avenue which is about three train stops from the city center. The owners chose this location because the rent is cheaper; rentals in the business center could go for up to three times more than at Bath Avenue. Accordingly, even with shorter business hours the owners could still recoup the cost of operations. *Bahay Kubo* is open five hours a day, six days a week. From Tuesday to Saturday they are open from 6 PM to 11 PM. On Sundays they are open from 5 PM to 10 PM. They are closed on Mondays. They do private lunchtime bookings for a minimum of 30 people. *Bahay Kubo's* business hours is in sharp contrast to that of the second Filipino restaurant, Makati Avenue, that is located at the city center and is open for business for 16-18 hours a day.

Apart from fine dining, *Bahay Kubo* entertains guests with the Manila Rhythm band, an acoustic trio from the Philippines. They were direct-hired from the Philippines by the owners through another company they established – the La Bamba Entertainment Company. Their other employees such as cooks and waiters are spouses of nurses who are already in Ireland. One of their employees hails from the

same town as the owner, but is not his relative. He did not hire a single relative out of concern that the others would be jealous.

Aside from its ambience, food, and service, the owners attributed the popularity of Bahay Kubo restaurant to advertising (two years of one or two-line advertisements in the *Irish Times*), word of mouth, and positive reviews first from the *Evening Herald*, then followed by the major dailies in Ireland, such as the *Irish Times*, the *Irish Independent*, *Sunday Independent*, *Metro Magazine/Sunday World*, *Image Magazine*, and also from their customers. The restaurant has been a consistent awardee of the Leading Restaurant Award and Georgina Campbell's Awards for Excellence since they started their operations.

Pinoy Sari-Sari Store

The Pinoy Sari-Sari Store has the distinction of being the first Filipino store in Ireland. It opened in September 2001. The owner was formerly a domestic helper brought by two medical doctors from Bahrain who came for a training in Dublin in 1988. She left her Bahraini employers in 1990 because she was being exploited and was not paid the salary they promised her. With the help of an Irish Columban priest she left her Bahraini employers and worked as a nanny for the three children of a very wealthy and influential man in Ireland who was a chief executive of a media company. After a decade working for the family she asked permission to leave because her wards were already grown-up and had become professionals in their own right. As I mentioned earlier, her employers asked her about her plans and offered to help. Her first venture (December 2000 to February 2001) was into recruitment of workers from the Philippines. This venture did not last long because she was sued by Filipinos because her business partner in the Philippines collected placement fees, a violation of Irish Law.

Her next business venture was to open the first-ever Filipino grocery store in Ireland -- the Pinoy Sari-Sari Store. From her labor recruitment business she was able to save €20,000. At the time, however, the amount required for non-EU owned businesses to operate was €40,000. Her former employers offered to help and advised her to secure a loan from a bank, but the bank rejected her loan application because she was just a housekeeper. Informing her employers about the outcome of her loan application, they told her to go back because they had called the bank and guaranteed her loan. When she returned to the bank she and the bank accountant went over her business plan including, but not limited to, the number of container vans to be brought in from the Philippines, her mark-up, and projected daily sales. After their discussion, she was granted the €20,000 loan that she requested. In September 2001, the Pinoy Sari-Sari Store was born.

Without any competition for a good two years, the business boomed. The Pinoy Sari-Sari Store floor space doubled in size. On December 8, 2004, slightly over 3 years since the opening of the first store, she opened up a branch in Dun Laoghaire.

Pinoy Sari-Sari Store sells a wide variety of popular Filipino products. Being inside the store feels like being inside a grocery store in the Philippines, with almost all Philippine-made products in the aisles. The Store later expanded its services to include *balikbayan* box (freight forwarding), phone cards distribution, and remittance center. To maintain good relations with the Filipino community, Pinoy Store sponsors some activities of Filipino communities. They co-sponsor concerts of popular Filipino entertainers, and they dedicated a wall or board specifically for Filipinos to post announcements or their business cards as a free service to the Filipinos.

Pinoy Sari-Sari Store is a family business and was the ticket for other family members to get to Ireland. Since the owner was previously a recruiter of workers, she knew the ins and outs of recruiting her family members. Despite her inside knowledge in recruitment, it took two years for the work permit of her son to be approved by the Irish government because she was asked by the DETE to provide proof that she had complied with the Irish employment policy of 60:40 EU-non-EU employee ratio. At the time she processed her relatives' work permits she did not have any employees from the EU. She was the lone staff and was vulnerable. Twice she was robbed at knife-point. After the second incident, she hired a lawyer and they used the robbery and her vulnerability in her appeal to the DETE so that she could hire and bring a relative to Ireland. The DETE granted her appeal. The robbery incidents had the unintended consequence of paving the way for her to recruit relatives from the Philippines.

Since her store is a place where Filipinos congregate, many Filipinos have approached her for possible employment, but she has had to turn them down because of the EU-Non-EU employee ratio. The Filipinos working at her store are mostly close relatives. Her eldest son helps manage the main store. The cashier is her daughter-in-law. The driver and accountant are her nephews. The manager of the Dun Laoghaire Branch is her daughter-in-law and another staff there is the relative of her daughter-in-law. She has had an equal number of EU personnel. Over the years, nationals from Ireland, Poland, and Slovakia have worked for her. The Slovaks and Polish would work for a year or two, but her Irish employees would last only between three days to one month. She said the Irish did not like to handle fish because they hate the smell. Although her EU employees work hard, the downside of hiring them is that they have difficulty memorizing Filipino products owing largely to their lack of familiarity with them.

Bayanihan Supermarket

Bayanihan Supermarket started its operation in 2004. It is owned by an Irish-Filipino couple (the husband is Irish, the wife is Filipino) who met and got married in Hong Kong. They left Hong Kong two years later and moved to Kuwait in 1991 immediately after the first gulf war, and lived there for 4 years. In 1995, the husband returned to Ireland at the early stage of the economic boom (the Celtic Tiger). Once settled in Ireland, he brought his family to Ireland. By then they had three young children, so the wife decided to become a stay-at-home mother. When the children started going to school, she decided to join the job market, but she found working for someone else difficult and it was not easy to juggle work and family responsibilities with the inflexible work hours. She quit her job and put up a business.

She opened a coffee shop at the Temple Bar which she operated for three years. During that period, her husband purchased a building located at Capel Street. The building has several commercial spaces on the ground floor and several flats on the upper floors. It took her about a year to decide what to do with the commercial spaces on the ground floor. She initially wanted to put up a restaurant, but the space was too small for her vision of a good restaurant (she eventually opened the Makati Avenue restaurant in 2008). She decided to open a store selling ethnic Filipino goods. Back then the only Filipino store selling products from the Philippines was the Pinoy Sari-sari Store, and it was popular and strong, but could not accommodate the demands of the growing number of Filipinos. Initially she just used one of the commercial spaces in the building she owns and rented out the others, but within a year her business took off, the customer base grew and so did the stocks of items to sell. To accommodate the growth, she expanded and occupied the neighboring commercial space, which is still part of the building she owns.

An estimated 90 percent of *Bayanihan* Supermarket's clientele are Filipinos and it is mostly a retail store selling food items. The owner also rented out a space inside the store to Lagura Enterprises, a well-respected remittance center. About 85 percent of the products it sells are Philippine made, and they only include those that are allowed in the European Union (unlike her competitors). As a matter of policy some meat and fish products from the Philippines such as hotdogs and corned beef, and *tuyo* (dried fish) are not allowed in the EU. In addition, most of the Philippine-made products sold in her store are not ordered from the Philippines. Instead, thanks to globalization, most are bought from distributors in the U.K, and she calculates that the costs are similar to what they would be if she ordered the products directly from the Philippines. (This is a similar strategy employed by another Asian store owned by a Dutch-Filipino couple). For Philippine-made products that are not available in the U.K., however, she has to order them directly from the Philippines.

The opening of a third Filipino store (Alto Food) slowed down her business, but only temporarily. During the first three months of Alto Food's operation, *Bayanihan* Supermarket's sales plunged 40 percent, but soon recovered thereafter. *Bayanihan's* owner attributed the plunge to human nature, a desire to try things that are new, but she quickly added that her customers eventually returned.

Bayanihan Supermarket is very active in the Filipino community in Ireland. Many Filipino organizations come to them to solicit for prizes or sponsorship of their events. They also allow Filipinos to post flyers or advertisements on designated areas in their stores. They view these as both a marketing strategy and part of a public service to the Filipino community.

Makati Avenue

Makati Avenue is owned by the owners of *Bayanihan* Supermarket and is located at Capel St. It started its operations in 2008. This was the business the owners had initially wanted to open, but the commercial space in the first building they bought was not ideal for the restaurant they had envisioned. When an opportunity to purchase another building in the same street presented itself, which had adequate floor size for a restaurant, they purchased the building and established the second Filipino Restaurant in Ireland.

A buffet and an a la carte restaurant, Makati Avenue is not as pricey as the high end Bahay Kubo restaurant. Its biggest advantage over Bahay Kubo is that it is accessible to more Filipinos because of its city center location, and it operates 16-18 hours a day, and is open from 11 AM to midnight.

Mercury Express (Courier Service)

Mercury Express is the first Balikbayan Box forwarder in Ireland. Established in 2001, it delivers *balikbayan* boxes all over the Philippines. Daqs, the manager, personally picks up the boxes from the clients' homes in Ireland. He is a one-man crew in the business about 80 percent of the time according to his own estimation. The only time he requires an assistant is when he is driving to counties that are far from Dublin or when there are several boxes to be picked up. The assistant's role is to help in loading the boxes into their van, which has a capacity of up to 20 boxes, while he issues the receipt. This process is repeated in each client's home. Each transaction is swift and efficient so that they do not stay up late on the road and are back in Dublin on the same day. The Balikbayan boxes are stored in a rented warehouse until the last Thursday of the month when they are loaded on a 20 or 40-foot container (depending on the number of boxes to be shipped that month) and onto

a ship bound for the Philippines. A 40-foot container can accommodate 272 boxes while a 20-foot can accommodate 136 boxes. The journey to the Philippines would take about two months.

Mercury Express shipment records during its first five years of operation show a steady progression. In 2001, there was only one shipment. In 2002 there were two. By 2003, the shipment was quarterly. In 2004, shipment was every two months. In 2005, it attempted a monthly shipment but because of some lean months they were able to ship only 8 times a year. Beginning in 2006, they made a commitment to their clients to ship monthly (every last Friday of the month) regardless of the number of boxes they had collected for shipment. The owner attributed the growth of his business to his quality service, advertising campaign, and word-of-mouth. They sponsor community affairs and sports activities as well.

The manager is aware that the service he provides is very important among the Filipinos in Ireland. A lot of his clients have told him personally that *"nindot na siya nga negosyo Daqs kay makatabatang bitaw"* (It is a very unique business, Daqs, because it helps people). Daqs also narrated a story of a man whose wife and children were still in the Philippines and could not join him because his salary was not sufficient to meet the minimum amount required by the Irish state. He told Daqs, *"Pasalamat gyud ko ani bai kay na-a ning balikbayan box, kay ma-o gyud ning silbing presents nila during Christmas."* (I am so happy that you have this Balikbayan box service because these packages serve as my presents for my family during Christmas). Daqs added that the man called to thank him as soon as he learned that his family had already received the packages and that they were ecstatic about his gifts.

III. Other businesses and Philippine government programs and policies that encourage transnational practices

A. *Europhil*

Europhil, a fully Filipino-owned family business in Ireland established in June 2006, is engaged in various ventures such as remittance, real estate, phone cards distribution, and Filipino cable distribution. Europhile also co-sponsors various community affairs and sports activities in Ireland such as basketball, chess, and dart games. In cooperation with other ethnic Filipino business in Ireland, they bring in world-class Filipino talents to Dublin to do concerts.

Europhil's remittance business has between 2,000-3,000 clients, 70 percent of them regular senders. The owner, Jun Mercado, simplified the remittance process for their regular clients by using internet banking. The migrant simply transfers money to his bank account in Ireland, and he in turn will remit the money for them. This process is cheaper for their clients than it would be to transfer the money to the Philippines directly through their own banks. This option, however, is not available to new clients. First time clients have to go to Europhil personally.

As a real estate agent, Europhil sells properties in the Philippines, such as condominiums and houses and lots to Filipinos in Ireland. Most of their clients are Filipino nurses. When a client decides to buy one of the properties listed, the actual sales transaction is closed in the Philippines, not in Ireland. If the sales were to be closed in Ireland, it would cost an additional 21-28 percent VAT, unlike the Philippines where the VAT is only 12 percent. In addition, it is the real estate developer in the Philippines who closes the deal with the buyer, not Europhil. Europhil's engagement in real estate also boosts their remittance business because the property buyers remit their payments to the real estate developers in the Philippines through them.

Europhil is also an agent of *The Filipino Channel* (TFC) box, that allows Filipinos in Ireland to view television shows of the ABS-CBN broadcasting company, one of the two largest tele-broadcasting companies in the Philippines. The TFC box is an IP (internet protocol) TV, which allows the subscriber to view Philippine TV shows via the internet, although slightly delayed by two hours. The TFC box has the advantage over satellite dish providers because in most cases landlords and some homeowners prohibit or dislike the setting up of satellite dishes. Subscription to the TFC box allows for daily streaming of social remittances from the Philippines, although some migrants see it as a step backwards given their desire to fully integrate into Irish society.

B. *Phish International*

Phish International is another remittance company. The name of the company is a conjugation of Philippines and Irish and is managed by an Irish director, with American and Filipino partners. It is in compliance with the 60:40 Irish-Filipino ratio. Aside from being a remittance center, Phish is also accredited by the Philippines' Social Security System (SSS) to accept membership payments and to promote SSS membership to non-members in Ireland. Phish provides several options for remittance to their clients – they can come personally to the office; use internet banking by transferring money from their account to Phish's account; or through automatic debit, where every month a certain amount from the client's bank account is automatically debited and transferred to the Phish account for remittance. Once Phish receives the money, they check which account it came from and remit the money automatically to the beneficiary listed on that account.

Although not part of their service, Phish has helped a lot of Filipinos find jobs within Ireland by acting like a "communication center" by relaying information about

available jobs to their clients who are looking for work for themselves or others. The information was usually gathered from casual conversations with their clients. Their incorporation of Filipino hospitality in their service makes their clients at ease especially those who, because of the nature of their work (e.g., domestic workers), are isolated from other Filipinos. Phish is a place where they can remit and talk to Filipinos at the same time. The Phish approach to service is very personal, treating their clients like they have known them for years. Inside their office there is free coffee, a couch, and a TFC television show playing in the background. A simple greeting of "How are you?" leads to a conversation which makes their clients feel at ease. Some clients would ask if they knew of job openings for their spouse. Other clients would post flyers in their office looking for or offering a job. There are others who tell them that they know of a company looking for workers with such and such qualifications. Others have multiple jobs and they are giving up some of them to those who are interested. Phish puts all the information they have collected next to their computer to inform the next person looking for a job. Phish has become an informal social space for those seeking or advertising job openings. Because of this unofficial service offered by Phish, one employee reported not being able to count the number of people who had asked her to be the godmother of their children as a gesture of gratitude for finding jobs for them or people they know.

C. *Unitravel*

Unitravel is a travel agency popular to many Filipinos because one of their Filipino travel agents', Marvin Castellano, is the host of the *Pinoy Idol in Ireland* singing competition. Marvin Castellano's understanding of the Filipino culture, the ease at which his clients can communicate with him, and his knowledge of the demands of their jobs work to his advantage. His practice to retain his customer base

is not to charge any consultation fee nor ask for deposit to tie the customer; this is unlike what is practiced in some travel agencies in Ireland. Having had so many friends and clients who are nurses, he understands fully why some of them have to change their bookings, sometimes 2, 3 or 4 times, which he does for them free of charge. When they apply for a visa to travel to other countries, he also provides them with trip itineraries required by Embassies as supporting documents, again free of charge. Some of those who request the trip itineraries purchase the tickets from him once they get their visa, while others do not, but that is okay with him.

D. *Philippine government's Pag-IBIG Overseas Program*

The Pag-IBIG Overseas Program is a government-run national savings and shelter financing program for Filipino workers. In Ireland, Ringo Olivario is the Pag-IBIG Overseas Program Marketing Representative. Membership in Pag-IBIG is mandatory for Social Security System (SSS) and Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) members. Many Filipinos were already Pag-IBIG members before coming to Ireland. The Philippine government launched the Pag-IBIG Overseas Program to leverage the resources of OFWs and provide them access to the benefits of Pag-IBIG members. This program is very popular because it is one of the sources of funds that Filipino migrant workers used to finance the construction, renovation, refinancing, or purchase of homes and/or lots in the Philippines. Members can borrow up to the amount allowed under the bracket of their monthly contribution. For example, members who contribute about €20 a month can borrow up to three million pesos. Members in Ireland pay their monthly contribution or loans in the Philippines or through a remittance company in Ireland such as Phish or I-remit. The Pag-IBIG does not have an office yet in the Ireland, but once the new embassy moves to a more

permanent location the Pag-IBIG will hold office there as part of the consular services for OFWs. This program encourages remittance-sending.

E. *The Philippine Government's Social Security System*

The SSS provides replacement income for workers in times of death, disability, sickness, maternity and retirement pension. In addition to such benefits, SSS offers emergency loans to members, and housing loans specifically for Overseas Filipino Workers. The mandate of the SSS stipulates:

> "It is the policy of the State to establish, develop, promote and perfect a sound and viable tax-exempt social security system suitable to the needs of the people throughout the Philippines which shall promote social justice and provide meaningful protection to members and their families against the hazards of disability, sickness, maternity, old age, death and other contingencies resulting in loss of income or financial burden. Toward this end, the State shall endeavor to extend social security protection to workers and their beneficiaries." (Section 2, RA 8282).

Although the mandate of SSS covers only Filipinos in the Philippines, the Philippine government has extended the coverage to Filipinos all over the world, especially with the institution of the housing loans benefits for Overseas Filipino Workers. To encourage membership and leverage the monetary resources of millions of OFWs, the SSS established branches and accredited companies in many parts of the world to collect membership fees and encourage others to join. In Ireland, the SSS joined with Phish International for this endeavor. Because many Filipinos in Ireland are in prime reproductive ages, many got pregnant and availed themselves of the SSS maternity benefits. This is in addition to the 6-months fully-paid maternity leave they have in Ireland. Also, whenever there are reported Filipino deaths in Ireland, Phish

checks with SSS to see if the deceased was a member so that the family can claim death benefits. This program also encourages remittance-sending.

F. *Philippine Dual Citizenship Law*

In 2003, Republic Act No 9225, otherwise known as the "Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003" or the Dual Citizenship Law was passed. This Philippine state project made the citizenship of Philippine citizens who acquire foreign citizenship permanent and encouraged the maintenance of ties with the homeland. The benefits of having dual citizenship include rights to own property in the Philippines, operate a business, practice one's profession, vote in elections, re-acquire a Philippines passport. An immigrant visa can be issued to a spouse, which would allow the spouse to work, lease or own personal property, freely enter and exit the Philippines, and acquire Filipino citizenship after 5 years of residency in the Philippines. Non-citizens can only own 40 percent of a property in the Philippines and would need $250,000 to be able to operate a business (Irwin, 2010).[32] Philippine citizenship can be re-acquired by simply accomplishing a form called "Petition for Dual Citizenship and Issuance of Identification Certificate (IC) pursuant to RA 9225" and taking the following oath at the nearest Philippine embassy or consulate:

> "I _____, solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines and obey the laws and legal orders promulgated by the duly constituted authorities of the Philippines, and I hereby declare that I recognize and accept the supreme authority of the Philippines and will maintain true faith and allegiance thereto; and that I impose this obligation upon myself voluntarily without mental reservation or purpose of evasion."

[32] Irwin, Will (2010). "Why get Dual Citizenship in the Philippines." http://eziniearticles.com/?Why-Get-Dual-Citizenship-in-the-Philippines?&id=3476930 Accessed November 16, 2010 at 4:17 PM.

IV. Evolution of Ethnic Filipino Associations

Over time, Filipinos have organized themselves to form associations on the basis of the community where they live in Ireland (host-town), their origin community in the Philippines (home-town), their occupation, or their religious affiliation. But, what factors explain the formation of these Filipino associations in Ireland? What are the processes of community formation? How did they unfold? What role did social capital play in the formation, maintenance, identification and implementation of programs, and addressing the challenges faced in the process? This section aims to address the above questions.

Pre-2000: The First Filipino Association in Ireland

The first Filipino association established in Ireland is the Filipino-Irish Association. This organization existed well before the mass arrival of Filipino, which started in 2000. Its main purpose is to provide a venue for the sparse population of Filipinos in Ireland to socialize.

The community is neither a host-town nor home-town association, but it is an association composed of Filipinos and their Irish spouses and friends from all over the Republic of Ireland. Some Filipinos from Belfast, U.K. also attend their events.

The organization grew mostly from chance meetings with Filipinos on the streets in Ireland or some social occasions. Back then Filipinos would literally stop on the street to ask an approaching Filipino-looking person if they were Filipino because it was so rare to see someone from home. Chance meetings led to introductions to other Filipinos, and this expanded the network of Filipinos dramatically. Eventually

they decided to socialize as one big group and then formally established an association.[33]

The leaders and members of the association that I interviewed all agreed that the Filipinos back then, and the association itself, was very close knit. They attribute this to the low number of Filipinos who joined initially. One member said, "Because we were very few, we did not take each other for granted. We attended every event of the association. But, when the number of Filipinos grew starting in 2000, our longing to see other Filipinos went away because now, we see them everywhere. Before, you long to see Filipinos because there were very few of us, and we seldom see each other as we were spread all over Ireland."

The closeness of the members of the association and their lack of discrimination in terms of membership were its greatest strengths. Their closeness was evinced by the fact that Filipinos from all over Ireland knew each other. Their membership included a broad spectrum of Filipinos. Nannies, embassy staff, cooks, and spouses of Irish citizens participated and co-mingled in the events of the organization. That contrasts with what initial members of the community perceive to be the present divide between nurses and low-skilled workers in some contemporary organizations.

Each year they organized a summer picnic in June or July to socialize and eat the food they brought with other Filipinos. They did not have a Filipino Day until recently; that is how the Philippine Independence Day in Ireland is now celebrated.

[33] My respondents observed that by now no one stops on the streets to ask if a person is Filipino. If one were to do so, many would not acknowledge your greeting, even if you clearly know they are Filipino because of the language they speak.

They also had an annual Christmas Party held at the Red Cow Inn every December. It would start at 10 am and end at midnight. The party had a program where they performed dances such as the *Tinikling* (the national dance of the Philippines), sang Christmas carols, and held a raffle draw. Practices for these dances were conducted at residents' homes. Some of the raffle prizes were donated by residents, but others like bottles of whisky/wine and boxes of chocolates were solicited from their Irish neighbors. Back then they did not have corporate/business sponsors. Current organizations have as sponsors ethnic Filipino business establishments, which use the opportunity to advertise and better their image in the community. To cover the expenses of their party, such as the cost of the hotel reservation and dinner, they sold raffle tickets. The selling of tickets earned a profit for the association that supplemented the funds they derived from membership fees.

At its peak the association had about 250 members. The association disbanded because new associations were formed with the mass arrival of Filipinos. Former members in areas outside Dublin now belong to associations much closer to them and this weakened the entire Ireland-encompassing Filipino-Irish Association. The members also became very busy with the arrival of so many Filipinos. Some of them became the owners of new ethnic Filipino businesses now operating in Ireland. Some former members also blame the unsuccessful leadership transition for the organization's failure.

Post 2000: Contemporary Filipino Associations

With the mass arrival of Filipinos in 2000, new associations were formed. These associations can be broadly categorized as host-town (or county-based) associations, home-town associations, occupation-based, and religious organizations. *Host-town associations* are Filipino organizations created and based in the host

country and usually bearing the name of the locale where they were organized or based such as South Dublin Filipino Association, Limerick Filipino Community, Galway Filipino Community, Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community, Crumlin Filipino Community, and the Filipino Organization. *Hometown associations* are Filipino organizations created and based in the host country and usually bearing the name of the locale in the Philippines where the members originated, such as Cagayanons (from Cagayan de Oro City), Kaliwat Iliganon Association (from Iligan City) and Pangasinense Association (from the province of Pangasinan). *Religious organizations* are a community of believers. Among them are the Couples for Christ, a group of Catholic married couples, and the Word International Ministries, which has the distinction of being the first Filipino Christian Church in Ireland.

But, how did these Filipino associations evolve in Ireland?

The basic structure of these associations is that they are composed of either a single or multiple clusters of Filipinos. Each cluster is formed through regular social gatherings of the same group of Filipinos during birthdays, wedding anniversaries, baptisms, Christmas parties, house blessings, and other social events.

Some associations are composed of a single cluster which grew over time with the addition of new members either through the arrival of new migrant workers or reunification of family members. The members of these clusters are usually related, co-workers, and/or neighbors in Ireland. However, most associations in Ireland are a product of the coming together of multiple clusters. These clusters comprising the associations are usually widely dispersed owing principally to the location of the place of employment of its members. At their gatherings, discussions about organizing a Filipino association often came up, but never gained traction, either because of lack of a time or resources, or because there were dissenting opinions. Yet, the potential for

action is there. Mr. Hilario Bagalacsa, President of the Limerick Filipino Community, in explaining why their association was formally organized only in 2006 said:

> "The impression of others [regarding the formation of an association] is that it is not necessary. They were not sold to the idea. Many were pessimistic about forming an association. However, they realized that it is necessary to address the issues that many migrant Filipino workers face [especially immigration-related], so we formed the organization."

In some associations, it took a ***spark*** to mobilize Filipinos to form them. The spark was often in the form of a person or institution with tremendous social capital spark might also be an event in Ireland or in the Philippines.

The Chaplain of the Filipino people, an Irish Redemptorist priest who served in the Philippines for 33 years, was the trigger in the formation of one of the host-town associations in Ireland – the Galway Filipino Community (GFC). In Galway, there were talks of forming an association in the past, but it did not materialize until after Fr. Pat O'Connell offered to officiate a Filipino mass once a month in Galway.

Initially, there were several clusters of Filipinos spread all over Galway. The once-monthly Filipino mass allowed Filipinos to converge in one location. After the mass they moved to a Church Hall where they meet, greet, share food and converse with other Filipinos. The coming together of Filipinos from all over Galway led to the formation of the Galway Filipino Community.

The Church as trigger or spark in community formation was also observed in the formation of the Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community. This time it was the Filipino nuns of the Presentation of Mary Sisters who instigated the formation of a community.

An ***event*** can also inspire the formation of an association. The formation of the Cagayanons and The Filipino Organization (TFO) was inspired by what their eventual

first President encountered when he went to buy groceries in an ethnic Filipino grocery store. A donation can was placed in the grocery store for the family of a Filipino who died after being struck by a truck while riding his bike in Ireland. He shook the donation can to get a sense of the amount inside and felt pity when he sensed that it contained very little money. This inspired him to convince his friends in the Church choir to form TFO, and to convince the group that he regularly meets at parties, consisting mostly of friends from his hometown to form the Cagayanons (from Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines) in Ireland.

One of the aims of a number of these organizations is to provide financial assistance to members who have had a death in the family, either in Ireland or the Philippines. The assistance only covers the death of the member or their immediate family members, specifically parents, spouse, and children.

Another reason associations form is that a ***split*** may occur in another organization. This may arise because of personality clashes between or among leaders; or because a losing candidate in an election of officers breaks away from the organization and forms a new one. Two organizations in Ireland became four due for these reasons. However, one of the two that split reunited in preparation for the establishment of the Philippine Embassy in Ireland and the arrival of its Ambassador.

Most ethnic Filipino associations in Ireland were established after spouses of professionals were given entitlement to work. This paved the way for more family reunification and the rise in the number of Filipinos in Ireland. It thus provided the critical mass needed to form and sustain an association. Ethnic associations also played a role in motivating reunited members to stay in Ireland by providing them with venues and programs to socialize with co-ethnics and keep them pre-occupied. Nurses have no problems socializing with co-ethnics because they see them at work all the time, but their spouses and children many have fewer opportunities to do so.

Ireland's multicultural society is also a contributing factor to the rise of ethnic associations. Filipinos and other nationalities have the freedom to move about and put up ethnic associations without fear of discrimination. In the event of racist acts against immigrants, Ireland has an Equality Authority agency that investigates these incidents.

Structure of Associations

The study of ethnic associations requires an investigation of their structures, as they reveal a lot about the dynamics within these associations and how they function.

Leadership

The general structure of leadership of the associations consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Some associations have assistant secretaries and assistant treasurers, and have various committees (e.g., sports committee, elections committee, and civic/religious committee), each with its own leaders. Some of these associations also have Cluster leaders or Area Representatives, who are responsible for disseminating information coming from the leadership to the members and for bringing up the concerns, opinions, and suggestions of members to the leadership. For example, in forming and sustaining the organization, leaders of the Galway Filipino Community (GFC) took advantage of the natural clusters in their organization to disseminate information to the members. This is done by contacting only the Cluster Leaders who will then forward the information to the cluster members. In some organizations, Cluster Leaders are called Area Representatives. The Kaliwat Iliganon Association (KIA), being a hometown association, has Area Representatives that represent the members in the county where they live.

The officers of the associations are determined through an election and are all volunteers. For some associations, the process of electing the officers is formal where they have Commission on Election (Comelec) officials who are members in charge of the election process, a deadline of filing of candidacy, a campaign period, and a general assembly where candidates can present their platform. Each member casts a vote and the winners are proclaimed by the Comelec officials and usually sworn in by the Consul, a priest, or out-going officers of the Organization.

In some associations the election is informal and usually conducted during their annual Christmas party. Nominations and voting are held at the party. Only those who are at the party can be nominated and are eligible to vote. Some members compared it to an election of class officers. Some members intentionally avoid the party if they sense an election of officers will be held so as not to be nominated or assigned to a committee.

Membership

Membership in host-town associations (or county-based associations) is more inclusive. Although these associations are location-specific, not all members live in the same county or locale in Ireland. It is being a Filipino that is most important. One host-town association leader said that to become a member in their organization "the common denominator is Filipino." Any Filipino who wants to join the host-town association is welcome to join (including their non-Filipino spouses). Even non-Filipinos are also welcomed to join, whether they are married to a Filipino or not. The openness of these associations is also reflected in their Facebook accounts where joining is open and all contents are public.

Membership in Hometown Associations, however, is not as porous as the host-town associations. Membership in most of these organizations are exclusively for

Filipinos coming from the same town in the Philippines; either they were born there, raised there, or lived there. However, their events are generally open to the public.

Membership in religious organizations is generally open to the public. Anyone can attend their Church service or take part in their programs.

Maintaining and Sustaining Associations

The main challenges in maintaining and sustaining the associations pertain to membership participation, fund raising, and level of trust on leaders.

Generally, the participation of members in the planning and preparation of association projects or events leave much to be desired. Members' participation in the planning or preparation for association events is dismal, although many do show up to participate in the actual events. In addition, when talking to members about planned activities they would generally support the endeavor, but once they are called to action, they are nowhere to be found, leaving the leaders to do much of the work.

Meetings have to be scheduled in advance -- at least one month before the actual meeting -- so members can plan ahead of time to be available (not working) that day. However, members usually renege on their promise to be present at the meeting if given the opportunity to bank that day. They almost always choose to bank rather than attend the meeting.

Raising funds is another challenge, and much of this is because of the strong suspicion of Filipinos of anyone holding or controlling the purse. Members demand accounting of funds and are suspicious about where the money goes. In fund raising campaigns for disaster relief in the Philippines, it is common to hear some members saying "*makakarating kaya 'yan?"* ("Will it reach the intended recipient?"), an expression of distrust that the money collected will be used for its intended purpose.

All the associations are non-profit, and most do not collect membership fees because the leaders say it is a source of conflict, and the main reason why some

associations break down, or even dissolve. In addition, leaders do not want to taint their reputation so they try to avoid what they have dubbed as the main source of rift within organizations. During campaign periods, candidates for the position of association leaders actually promise not to collect membership fees. They generally raise funds in some other manner. If association funds are short, most officers of the organization would use their own money to fund their operations without asking for reimbursement.

Some associations do collect membership fees, and the frequency of collection and amount varies. Some contribute €2 or €10 on a monthly basis, while others contribute €20 on an annual basis. The main problem, however, is collection because not all members pay membership fees. Faced with this dilemma, the associations have adopted different approaches. One association decided not to vigorously pursue the collection of fees because they cannot force people to pay. Another association has pursued the collection earnestly by including the collection of dues as part of the job description of their Area Coordinators. To lessen the burden of the Area Coordinators in collecting dues, members can opt to have their bank accounts debited monthly and the money transferred to the association's account. This ensures that the money goes directly to the association and there is an electronic trail to back it up.

To raise additional funds, the associations organize events that have direct or side benefits to the members and that entice them to give voluntarily. Examples of these events are Raffle Draws and Bingo Socials. They also solicit prizes for these events from various businesses that are frequented by Filipinos, which are mostly ethnic Filipino stores, restaurants, or remittance centers. They have some fund raising activities that do not require members to dole out money, such as singing Christmas carols in homes and giving advanced notice to the homeowners that the caroling is for a cause. Part of the amount raised in their fund raising activities goes

to the operations of the organization, but most is donated or given directly to their beneficiaries in the Philippines.

Although not mentioned by the leaders, growing the membership is one of the ways that their programs have been funded and the association sustained. Some associations actively recruit members, but others do not. Instead, they show the importance of the association in uniting Filipinos and in migrant rights advocacy. They also make bigger and better events to encourage Filipinos to participate in their fund raising activities, with the hope that they will eventually join their organization.

Purpose of the Associations

The main reason for the establishment of associations is to unite and develop strong friendship with Filipinos living in the same county in Ireland (host-town associations), or coming from the same town in the Philippines (home-town associations), or who share the same faith. The leaders mentioned that with the associations they have a unified voice on issues pertaining to migrant workers, and in meetings with other association leaders, the Ambassador, their local council, and in other events in Ireland. The word unity is even emblazoned in some association logos. The Kaliwat Iliganon has on its logo “Unity, Friendship, Service”, while the South Dublin Filipino Association has “Unity, Community, Integrity.” In one organization the word United is part of the name – the United Filipino-Irish Association in Cork. The word “Filipino” is also common in almost all names of the associations indicating that it is an ethnic and cultural organization.

The leaders added that the association is a source of support for newcomers and “old-timers” alike citing their gatherings provide opportunities for Filipinos to have fun, feast on Filipino food, get to know and enjoy the company of other Filipinos. The associations also organize recreational sports activities such as basketball and volleyball; and send a team to compete in inter-county Filipino

basketball league held in Dublin. Others go camping or arrange trips to Dublin during the once-yearly Filipino Day event.

The associations are also a source of support for members in times of difficulties and challenges especially in relation to the immigration policies in Ireland. Many of these organizations regularly invite legal or immigration experts to shed light on pressing immigration policies.

The associations are often tapped by members to help find accommodation or other support needed by an incoming and/or returning OFW and/or their family members. One astonishing program is the Chariots of Blessing, instituted in 2006 by the Word International Ministries, the first Filipino Christian Church in Ireland. The program provides free shuttle service to any member and/or their relatives needing a ride to or from the Dublin airport. They also provide the same service to newcomers brought to their attention by their members. In addition to fetching them, they also provide them orientation about Ireland. Although free of charge, the Filipino who have benefited from the service have usually prepared a *pasalubong* (gift) to give to the person who picked them up as a token of their appreciation.

The importance of the associations in getting to know other Filipinos is captured by this statement from one of the leaders:

> "The association is good because it is here where you get to know a lot of Filipinos. You don't know where they came from and it gives you a chance to ask them those questions. Since this association was first started, I have met and known a lot of Filipinos. If it weren't for the association, I wouldn't be minding them and they wouldn't mind me. Because of this association, we see each other during our gatherings and we get to know each other." - *Arnel, Community Leader*

The purpose of the association is also illustrated in its activities. Some associations have programs that provide support to their members in terms of social insurance in the form of assistance to members for funeral and burial expenses of an immediate relative (parents, spouse, siblings, and children). To be eligible, members must sign up for the program and contribute a minimum amount whenever one of the eligible members has a death in the family. This form of assistance, however, is frowned upon by some organizations because they say that Filipinos in Ireland can afford to bury their dead relatives in the Philippines with their own income in Ireland. For these associations, assistance to members for this purpose is left up to the members who are friends of the person whose relative has died.

Other associations provide cash loans to cash-strapped members through a revolving credit program. For the TFO and the Cagayanons, this program developed by chance. They had money in hand from their membership fees and a member was in need of cash, so they decided to loan their member some money from the general fund; after that it became part of their program.

It is also through members of these organizations that some have found jobs. The Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community members who worked at a local heart stent-making company have recommended unemployed members of the association for jobs in the company.

These associations also have integration activities which include among others participation in local council meetings, participation in events in Ireland like the St. Patrick's Day's parade, participation in a Church Choir, and organizing a Filipino Cultural Show showcasing the culture of the Filipino people. For example, the Galway Filipino Community performed Filipino street dancing during the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. The Limerick Filipino Community joined the St. Patrick's Day celebration and paraded a scale model of the Philippine Jeepney (made of cardboard).

They also participated in the World of Food International Barbecue Competition and won first prize in the chicken barbecue category.

Communities also bring and expose to Ireland elements of the Filipino culture. The Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community organized a performance showcasing the Filipino culture, and during the event they also served free Filipino delicacies, and offered free lessons on how to dance the *Tinikling*. The Kaliwat Iliganon Ireland annually celebrates the feast of their hometown's patron saint, St. Michael. They start with a mass followed by sumptuous lunch/dinner and fun and games.

These organizations also have social and development programs in the Philippines. In the next section I discuss these programs, the motivations behind them, and the process of identifying their programs, beneficiaries and partners in the Philippines.

Social and Development Programs in the Philippines

All communities/organizations have some form of aid or social projects benefiting orphanages, the poor, or victims of calamities in the Philippines. The most common form of aid or social program is cash and kind contribution to victims of calamities/disasters in the Philippines, such as a flood or typhoon. Other programs include:

- Regular cash contribution to *Bantay-Bata 163* a child abuse watchdog foundation
- A school audio-visual room
- Construction of a housing unit
- Dental mission
- Feeding program
- A scholarship program
- And the biggest of them all – construction of an entire village consisting of 32 housing units, with another village consisting of at least 30 units

Motivation of associations to give aid to the Philippines

What motivated these associations to give aid to the Philippines? Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) identified two sources of social capital that predispose people to be altruistic – value introjections and bounded solidarity.

Value introjections are values learned through the process of socialization. Through socialization an individual unconsciously incorporates into his own psyche behaviors from the members of the collectivity. This process creates expectations from members to behave in certain ways which are appropriable as a resource by the the members.

Bounded solidarity emerges from special circumstances that lead to principled group behavior. This is usually observed among co-nationals or co-ethnics because they share the same nationality/ethnicity. This sense of identity expands network ties not just to friends and relatives, but to co-ethnics/co-nationals as well. Thus, resources are shared or exchanged in solidarity with members of this expanded network especially in times of turmoil or calamity in the country or area of origin. Donors grant resources out of solidarity with a particular individual or group. The altruistic disposition of some members of this group can be appropriated by the other members as their source of social capital.

Religion and religiosity play a significant role in shaping the values and principled group behavior that predisposed these associations to give aid to the Philippines. The role of religion in predisposing members of the associations to give has its roots in the belief of almost all Filipinos in a higher being. Although there is a significant Muslim minority in the Philippines, the Catholic religion is the most significant in the context of the Philippines-Ireland migration system; both countries are over 80 percent Catholic. Combined with Protestants, Christians make up over 90 percent of the population both in the Philippines and Ireland.

Religion not only predisposes association members to give, but it has been instrumental in the association formation itself. Some associations started upon the instigation of religious leaders, and the clusters comprising the associations were often formed as a result of celebrating events of religious significance such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, baptisms, Christmas, and Easter. The overwhelming reason that associations cited for instituting social and development programs in the Philippines was "to share our blessings."

The role of religion in shaping the values and principles of Filipinos is manifested in the very high level of trust placed by Filipinos in the Church vis-à-vis non-government and government organizations. The religiosity of the individual and the association in general also influence the level of gift-giving and this is observed in the substantial difference between the amounts of aid given by members of religious organizations versus non-religious organizations.

Trust in the Church vs. NGO vs. Government

Filipino associations have very high level of trust in the Church. The Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community's donation to the nuns of the Presentation of Mary's for a poor family's house construction did not require any proof from the Sisters that the money reached the intended recipient. They trusted that the money they donated for the house construction would be given to the intended recipient.

The existing network of churches or missions in the Philippines of the various religious orders in Ireland is also often used by Filipino associations to channel their donations to victims of calamities and disasters in the Philippine. Filipino associations contact the religious orders in Ireland informing them of their intention to donate. In turn, the religious orders channel the donation directly to the intended beneficiaries through their Church network. Often the receiving Church would send an acknowledgment receipt and sometimes a report on how the money was spent.

NGOs are also trusted by the Filipino associations, but not as much as the Church. The donation of the Couples for Christ Ireland to their social arm the NGO Gawad Kalinga in the Philippines for the establishment of the first Irish Village required receipts, photos, and other documentation. Some members visited the Irish Village while on vacation in the Philippines to document its progress. Some form of documentation was also needed when working with existing NGOs in the Philippines like the Bantay Bata 163 Foundation, a child abuse watchdog.

It should be noted that these documentations, although required by the donors, were voluntarily provided by the NGOs to ensure transparency. Just like the leaders of the donor associations, they did not want to tarnish their reputation, or risk losing support.

Filipino associations in Ireland would never partner with the Philippine Government, however. Graft and corruption are the main reasons cited by the leaders. When asked whether they would channel their donations to government agencies, the leaders had these things to say:

> "Derecho na para wala ng por ciento or SOP." *(We'll give it directly to the beneficiaries so that no one gets a cut.)*
>
> "Hahahaha"
>
> "Mahirap na!" *(That's dangerous!)*

The previous government under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was completely distrusted by the associations. It is unclear whether their attitude toward the government will change with the present government of President Benigno Aquino Jr. International assessments signify that the associations' distrust of the government appears warranted. In 2008, the Philippines scored 2.5 points out of 10 in the Corruption Perceptions Index of Transparency International. In the same year, the

Philippines ranked 141st out of 180 countries (along with countries such as Yemen, Cameroon and Iran). Just a year before, the country had ranked 131st signifying that corruption in the Philippines had worsened, at least comparatively.

Contribution of religious versus non-religious organizations

The organization that financed the establishment of the 1st Irish *Gawad Kalinga* Village, and the under construction 2nd Irish *Gawad Kalinga* Village, is the chapter of the Couples for Christ in Ireland. The cost of building the 1st Irish GK village amounted to more than €20,000 and the cost of the 2nd Irish GK village is expected to be more with inflation. These amounts are substantially more than the €1,000 – €3,000 raised by non-religious host- and home-town associations. The 1st Irish Village was funded through automatic regular monthly salary deduction for some members, one-time donation for others, and through sponsorship of a movie about the lives of *Gawad Kalinga* beneficiaries, which was shown in Ireland in 2007. Funding for the 2nd Irish village includes a raffle draw which raised an amount equivalent to four housing units.

In addition to religion and religiosity, the type of beneficiaries also explains why the associations provide aid to the Philippines. There seems to be a difference in the giving behavior of members depending on whether the beneficiary of the funds is a single individual or family, or multiple individuals or families.

Community leaders find it "*pahirapan*" (very difficult) to collect money from members. The leaders usually mention this in the context of describing their difficulty in collecting money for programs where the beneficiary is an individual, such as when they collect money to raise funds to help in the burial expenses of a member's immediate relative who has died in the Philippines. Some members are reluctant to part even with €2, according to the leaders. Part of the reason they said is that many of the members are not really close to the beneficiary.

However, the behavior of the members appears different if the program benefits many people or families even when they do not know or have not seen the beneficiaries at all. This is true, for example, for assistance for victims of calamities or disasters in the Philippines. Not much persuasion is needed for members to provide aid, as they willingly contribute in kind or cash, and at higher amounts such as €20.

Process of identifying programs, beneficiaries and partners in the Philippines

One of the major challenges faced by the leaders of the big associations in Ireland is the lack of participation of members. Most members do not attend meetings nor help in the preparation of their events. It is usually up to the leaders of the associations to determine their projects. Once determined, the members' opinions are sought during the general assembly or through the cluster leaders, and then evaluated by the leadership. Unlike big associations, the smaller associations have more membership participation in terms of planning their projects because of the ease of working with only a few members.

Victims of calamities in the Philippines, such as typhoon, flood, landslides, or other natural and man-made disasters are usually the main beneficiaries of the associations. In these circumstances the associations almost always partner with a Religious Order in Ireland that channels their donations through their Church network in the Philippines.

Other beneficiaries of the social programs of Filipino associations are NGOs with substantial social capital due to their trustworthiness, longevity, familiarity, and cause-oriented work. The *Bantay Bata 163*, a child welfare program of ABS-CBN Foundation , and *Unang Hakbang sa Kinabukasan* program of the Kapuso Foundation were among the beneficiaries. Filipinos are familiar with these two foundations because they were established by competing television network companies in the Philippines. In the case of *Gawad Kalinga*, being the social arm of the Couples for

Christ, this NGO is automatically the beneficiary of the Couples for Christ chapter in Ireland.

Other organizations devised creative ways of identifying their beneficiaries, for example through a raffle. The Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community, for example, held a "name a public school" contest where each member writes down a name of a public school, which could be the school they graduated from or those located in their hometown, and the names were raffled off. The school whose name was drawn won an audio-visual facility.

It should be noted that Sligo's partiality towards public schools points again to Filipinos preference to give where more people and the less privileged would benefit. In addition, the raffle was made so as not to give any preference or advantage to a specific geographic area. This was left to chance. The location of the beneficiaries is the main difference between host-town and hometown associations. The latter focuses their development programs in their hometown while the former does not have any fixed location for their development programs.

Funding for the Programs

Another major challenge faced by the associations in Ireland is how to fund their programs. Since most of them do not collect membership, they have to be creative in raising funds. Many of them use multiple methods of raising funds.

The Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community sings Christmas carols during the Christmas season, and raffle prizes to raise funds. Sligo's caroling raised €675 which they gave to the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary for their housing project for a poor family in the Philippines. Their raffle netted €3,000 for the community, part of which was used for their audio-visual facility program in one of the public schools in the Philippines.

The Couples For Christ has voluntary regular automatic salary deduction, cinema movie sponsorship, and raffle. Their fund raising activities had built 32 housing units in the 1st Irish GK Village, and 30 more currently under construction for the 2nd Irish GK Village.

The South Dublin Filipino Association has Bingo Socials, and most of the prizes for these events were solicited from ethnic Filipino stores and remittance centers in Ireland.

The Cagayanons collect €10 monthly from each member with the goal of raising €7,000. The money will be used to provide toilets, medicine, and a playground similar to those in Ireland in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines. As the money in the organization's account grew with membership contributions pouring in each month, the members agreed to lend the collected amount to members in need of money with a fixed interest of 20 Euros to be paid in full within two months. This helped increase the funds of the organization.

The Limerick Filipino Community did a bag-packing fundraising campaign. They approached the management of a big grocery store in Limerick, explained the objectives of their fund raising campaign, and were given permission to pack the grocery bags of patrons. For their effort, the patrons usually would donate to their cause. In all they raised, €2,400 for their efforts.

To raise funds for the victims of Typhoons Ondoy (Ketsana) and Pepeng (Parma) which struck Metro Manila in October 2009, the County Donegal Filipino community held Car Washes for a Cause, Guest Tea Party, Show/Disco for a Cause, after mass collections, collections at football games, personal contributions from Filipinos, and NGOs. Members held radio interviews and posted photos to raise awareness about the tragedy and the fund-raising activities. In Twintown, County Donegal, the Filipino community was only expecting to collect €500 from the after

mass collections, collections at football games, and personal contributions from Filipinos and NGOs, but instead netted €3,500. The money was donated to the Sagrada Familia Parish at Sitio Veterans in Silangan village in Quezon City. However, the biggest amount raised was from the Guest Tea Party organized with the help of the former CEO of the Health Service Executive. The party was attended by over 400 guests from various sectors – business, politics, health service, and NGOs. The event raised €20,000 and was formally turned over to the organization during the Show/Disco for a cause.[34]

V. Evolution and Roles of Other Support Institutions

A. The Chaplain of the Filipino People

The Church is the biggest ally of migrant workers – as advocates for their rights. The two leading migrant rights advocacy groups were formed by religious orders (the evolution and role of one of them is discussed below). In addition to this advocacy groups, there is Fr. Pat O'Connell, the Chaplain of the Filipino people in Ireland.

Fr. Pat O' Connell belongs to the Redemptorist Order, which has had an on-going mission in the Philippines since 1926. Fr. Pat spent 31 years in the Philippines (1959-1991). Having a mission and having worked there for three decades, Fr. Pat, through the Redemptorist Fathers, saw it fit to be involved in welcoming the Filipino migrant workers coming to Ireland.

As his first point of contact Fr. Pat invited Filipino nurses to his place, the Redemptorist Province, where they had a meal and a mass to welcome them. He followed this with visits to their workplace and residence. He realized that many of

[34] GMANews.tv "Pinoys in Ireland hold car wash, tea party, disco for cyclone victims." http://www.gmanews.tv/story/176443/pinoys-in-ireland-hold-car-wash-tea-party-disco-for-cyclone-victims. Accessed March 13, 2010 10:00 AM

the nurses are lonely, having left their families behind in the Philippines, some even leaving small children behind, which he imagined to be really painful for them. As a result of his engagements with Filipinos, they asked him to be the Chaplain of the Filipino People, which he accepted.

During his conversations with Filipinos, a decision was made to have a Filipino mass once a month. Filipinos requested it to be weekly, but he rejected the idea because he did not want them to be an isolated group. He told them to get involved in their parish also. However, he agreed to the once-monthly Filipino mass so that Filipinos could keep their own culture and they come together once a month as Filipino community.

As Chaplain of the Filipino people he holds Filipino masses in Belfast (1st Sunday), Dublin (2nd Sunday), Galway (3rd Sunday), and Limerick (4th Sunday). In addition, he performs baptisms, marriages, and house blessings. Filipinos also come to him for help with issues or problems. In simple problems he gives them advice. When others come to him for help with immigration-related issue, he refers them to other people or agencies, such as MRCI and solicitor-friends who handle some of the cases for free. He then follows up on them.

In 2000, during the time when recruitment of nurses was still new in Ireland, there was no policy for appeal when nurses failed the six-week period of adaptation and assessment. Some nurses failed because of difficulty in communication, while others said that the assessment was too subjective. This was illustrated by a glaring discrepancy between the evaluations of the same person by two ward sisters. Fr. Pat wrote a letter to the Minister for Health indicating his shock and the shock of others with whom he discussed the matter (including a lawyer) that nurses who failed the period of assessment were not given the opportunity to appeal the decision. He added that the system did not have any protection against racial bias among those responsible

for the assessment. Fr. Pat was pleasantly surprised when the matron of one of the hospitals in Dublin asked to see him and indicated that his letter had been sent around by the Minister for Health. Because of his advocacy, all nurses now have the right to appeal if they fail the period of assessment. If an appeal is granted they will be given an additional six weeks of period of assessment.

B. The Migrants Rights Council Ireland (MRCI)

The Migrants Rights Council Ireland (MRCI) was founded by Columban missionaries in 2001. It was conceived at the Mission Alive program of the Irish Missionary Union, as they observed the growing number of migrant workers in Ireland. MRCI started with an all- volunteer staff -- 2 nuns, 1 priest, and 1 lay missionary. Their start-up funding mostly came from the Columbans and was supplemented by the allowances of the missionaries, who would contribute their own money to help a migrant in distress. A salaried coordinator was added to the team when the Columbans increased MRCI's funding. At present, MRCI receives funding from various institutions, such as the Combat Poverty Agency, The One Foundation, and the European Union Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals.

The organization did not have much of a structure at the beginning. Now, MRCI has a strategic plan – with goals and targets set for up to 3 years, and with clearly defined core values and mission.

The core values and principles[35] that underpin MRCI's work are:

- A focus on social justice and equality
- A commitment to working toward an anti-racist and intercultural society
- A concern with the human rights of migrant workers and their families
- An emphasis on community work as an underpinning approach to our work

[35] http://www.mrci.ie/about_mrci/index.htm. Accessed September 6, 2010, 11:02 PM.

- A commitment to the empowerment and participation of migrant workers
- A commitment to working in solidarity with others who share a similar ethos
- A commitment to prioritizing the needs and concerns of those experiencing multiple forms of discrimination and injustice, e.g. migrant women

MRCI was initially called the Filipino-Asian Information Center because it was catering mostly to the queries of migrant Filipino workers. The primacy of the Filipinos in the early stages of MRCI's existence was simply a matter of opportunity -- many of them were lining up at Stella Maris Seafarers Club, close to their office, to buy the Seafarer's phone card that they used to call their relatives in the Philippines. Since there was also significant number of Chinese nationals, they changed the name to Filipino-Chinese Information Center. Then they modified the name once more to Migrant Information Center because the previous name did not capture the growing number of migrants from other countries especially those from EU Accession states such as the Poles, who were not yet EU citizens at the time. Eventually, they changed the name to Migrant Rights Center Ireland because they not only provide information, but also advocate for the rights of migrant workers,.

MRCI's free legal information and advocacy service assists abused and exploited migrant workers (usually work permit holders because these workers are tied to their employers) in lodging formal complaints. They had been victorious in numerous cases, netting for their clients €1.3 million for unpaid wages and rights violations.

MRCI's community work includes a drop-in center where migrants can talk about their problems to a case worker. Through the cases gathered from the drop-in center, they identified common issues, which they elevated into a policy agenda. MRCI believes that the issues will not stop unless the root cause is addressed through policy change. However, engaging policy makers and making them support their

cause requires facts. Thus, MRCI conducts and publishes results of their research to provide solid evidence about the issues.

Dealing with migrant workers' issues requires navigating the bureaucracy – knowing the ins-and-outs as well as the persons to contact. MRCI has developed relationships with various agencies over the years, which help streamline the process. For common cases, like dealing with child benefits of legal migrant workers, the usual process of resolving an issue was to submit an initial request which outlines the situation. If the request is rejected, they appeal to the ministry's Appeals Section. Knowing the persons to contact in the ministry ensures direct communication with the person or people who can address the issue. MRCI usually contacts the policy officers in the Ministry involved because they know the policy and can help streamline solutions.

In novel and complex cases i.e., one that MRCI has not handled before, MRCI would write to the appropriate ministry an initial request which outlines the situation. For example, can an undocumented woman who has just given birth receive child benefits? If the request is rejected, they file a compassionate appeal addressed to their contacts in the appeals section of the ministry. If the appeal is elevated to the level of the Minister, they would request a meeting. If the appeal is rejected, they would launch a campaign because they believe the cause they are fighting for is well within the rights of their clients. Whenever their appeals are granted, however, they request the policy officers within the ministry to write a memorandum regarding the judgment and to circulate it widely so that their staff will be made aware. In some situations MRCI ended up organizing an information drive to inform employees of the counties about a new or updated policy if a memo was not disseminated widely enough.

For the most part, novel cases are less complicated. MRCI simply identifies the issues, then contacts appropriate government agencies, and asks them about the services that they can offer to their clients.

Two of the arduous challenges MRCI has encountered in their advocacy work involve ad hoc cases and lodging complaints against recruiters.

Article 4, Section 6 of the Immigration Act of 2004 stipulates:

> "An immigration officer may, on behalf of the Minister, by a notice in writing to a non-national, or an inscription placed on his or her passport or other equivalent document, attach to a permission under this section such conditions as to duration of stay and engagement in employment, business or a profession in the State as he or she may think fit, and may by such a notice or inscription at any time amend such conditions as aforesaid in such manner as he or she may think fit, and the non-national shall comply with any such conditions."

This discretionary power of the immigration officer stipulated in the law became a problem especially in MRCI's bridging visa campaign. The bridging visa is an extension given to migrants who arrived legally in the Ireland, but whose work permits/visa lapsed either because they were made redundant or left their employer because of workplace abuse. Work permit holders must file a complaint to get out of exploitative situations. MRCI asked for 3 to 6 months work permit/visa extension for their clients who were made redundant or exploited to give them time to look for new work, but the granting of extensions solely depends on the interpretation of the immigration officers – some give extensions, others don't. The granting of extensions was very subjective. There was no protocol that clearly stipulates what would merit an extension. MRCI acknowledged that this lack of consistency was partly because the Irish Naturalization and Immigration Service (INIS), the agency responsible for

administering the functions of the Minister for Justice and Law Reform in relation to asylum, immigration (including visas) and citizenship matters, has just been recently established. MRCI's actions, however, made them aware of the importance of knowing the rules and making consistent judgments.

Another challenge involves lodging complaints against recruiters. As migrants learned upon arrival that it is illegal for recruitment agencies to charge placement fees for jobs in Ireland, some of them sought the assistance of MRCI so they could reclaim their placement fees. MRCI can certainly help, but they had to warn their clients about the dangers of pursuing the claim because they had had cases where the complainant's families in the origin country received death threats. When cases have involved death threats to families left behind, MRCI has reproted the incident to the Department of Justice in Ireland, and to the local police in the origin country.

A related challenge is that despite hundreds of reported victims of the placement fee scam, only a handful would come forward to file a complaint. Despite the injustice done to them, they still felt that they owed a debt of gratitude to their recruiters for bringing them to Ireland. Sancha Magat, one of the Columban lay missionaries working at MRCI, said: "The culture of debt of gratitude is very strong. It is very difficult to exercise your rights and entitlements because of debt of gratitude. It is the hindrance to getting your rights and entitlements." Compounding the reasons for a few complainants is the marked improvement in the living condition of the migrant and of the families they left behind in the Philippines. Back in the Philippines some of them were unemployed. In Ireland, they have jobs. Others had long since recouped the cost of the placement fees, had already invested on properties in the Philippines, and had chosen to forget the injustice committed against them by the recruiters.

MRCI has had many accomplishments in its advocacy work. Apart from the advocacy projects mentioned above, their initiatives have led to policy shifts providing work entitlements to spouses of work visa holders in 2004, and to the spouses of work permit holders in 2007.

C. Word International Ministry - The First Filipino (Non-Catholic) Christian Church

The First Filipino Christian (Non-Catholic) Church started when a female Filipino "worker" (missionary) based in Dubai, who happens to be nurse by profession, was sent by the Word International (WIN) Ministry in 2001 to initiate a Christian church in Ireland. She was sent to Ireland by the Ministry initially to reach out to Filipino nurses coming to Ireland whose numbers had been climbing rapidly. WIN Ministry's interest in sending a "worker" was piqued by the decline in membership of the Church in Dubai because of the migration of nurses and because of the incessant questions of friends and relatives in Dubai on behalf of those who had left for Ireland about a Church the new arrivals in Ireland could attend.

Coming to Ireland, WIN's missionary did not know anyone. Although a nurse, she came to Ireland on a missionary visa and affiliated with the Church of God based in Drogheda, Ireland. Affiliating with the Church of God was natural because WIN branched out of the Church of God.

In her first 6 months in Ireland, she traveled and met a number of Filipinos in Galway, Cork, Belfast, and Dublin, among others. But, her breakthrough came when a recruitment agency responsible for bringing hundreds of Filipino nurses to Ireland called all their recruits to a gathering in Drogheda. She was invited to the gathering, where she met and talked to a number of Filipino Christian nurses based in Dublin. They kept in touch and she came to meet them in Dublin.

The need for a Filipino Christian Church

Filipino migrant workers came to Ireland to address an economic need. But, with almost all Filipinos believing in a God, it meant they also came with spiritual needs that had to be fulfilled. They also came with a need for fellowship with people of the same faith (and ethnicity/nationality), if possible.

As believers in God, one of the institutions they looked for upon arrival in Ireland was a Church where they could worship and feed their spiritual hunger. Filipino Catholics had no difficulty because Catholic churches are ubiquitous in Ireland, as in the Philippines. Non-Catholic Christians had fewer options, however. They desired to have a regular Sunday service in fellowship with other Christian Filipinos, but there was no one at that time who could help in Church planting, until the missionary arrived.

The Victory Church in Dublin was one of the Christian churches where a number of Filipinos attended worship services. It was ministered by a white South African pastor. After Church service, Filipinos would usually proceed to the home of one of the members to socialize, a common need for migrants. Socialization included preparing meals, chatting, singing, etc. Adding to the attractiveness of socializing at the home of a member was that they were able to save money by not dining out. Since they were all Christians, they decided to elevate their social gatherings into a Christian Fellowship. They started to pray together, share testimony about God's goodness, did bible study, and followed a curriculum to study the word of God. This transformation was facilitated by the missionary who searched for a venue, prepared the liturgy, and identified and procured the resources needed for the Fellowship. The members of the Christian Fellowship eventually left Victory Church, and gradually the other Filipinos followed. Being a Fellowship consisting mostly, if not entirely, of Filipinos was the main draw.

The departure of the Filipinos from Victory Church did not sit well with the Pastor there. In his sermon, he preached about fishing at somebody else's fishpond, a swipe to the missionary whose actions he likened to poaching – harvesting the harvested. The missionary countered that it was not her intention for the Filipinos to leave Victory Church, but it was the desire of the Filipino church members. They were the ones who decided to leave the church and to organize a Christian Fellowship composed of Filipinos. She added that the Filipinos were not the Pastor's harvest anyway because they were already Christians before coming to Ireland.

The group held their first Fellowship on a Sunday at the St. Stephen's Green Park. They chose the park because they did not have a venue that could accommodate 20 Filipinos. Midway through the service they were stopped from singing and playing the guitar by policemen at the park because, according to them, they were invading the privacy of the people who were there to enjoy the park. They were shocked by the remark because they thought that Ireland was a free country and being in Europe, and known for civil liberties, they should have been allowed to sing and play guitar at the park. This is in stark contrast to the missionary's experience in Dubai where they did not get stopped when singing praise songs in public spaces, such as a park.

Having been banished from St. Stephen's Green Park, the missionary looked for a church where they could hold a service. Because many of the churches in Ireland back then had a dwindling population, she contacted a Pastor's group comprising of Anglican, Presbyterian, Pentecostal and others about the possibility of sharing a Church. She got in touch with a Romanian Pentecostal church that needed help with rent and they agreed to share a church that was ideally located at the City Center. The Sunday service of Romanians was held in the morning, while those of the Filipinos were in the afternoon. This became their home for the next two years.

Finding a place for worship marked the formal establishment of the first Filipino Church in Ireland, which they called the Lord of the Harvest Church. The Church has a remarkable character. The pioneer members of the Church actually came from various religious groups in the Philippines e.g., Four-Square, Jesus is Lord, Baptist, etc. The core principles of these churches do not fully coincide, so the members met and agreed to agree on the important parts. For instance, they believe that Jesus is the son of God that there is no other way to God, but Jesus. Salvation is through him alone, and there is eternal life and life after death. They believe they will be judged and Jesus is coming again. Because these churches disagree as to when Jesus will return, however, they decided to keep quiet on this issue.

Prior to having a full-time pastor in the Church, older members would take turns doing the exhortations during their Sunday service. They also invited pastors from local churches, some of them Irish, to speak. The need of the members for church services, such as child dedication and marriages, among others, was growing. Although Pastors in Ireland are not licensed to marry, the spiritual blessing of the union coming from the Church is important to the members. And because most of them were working full time and the tasks of building a Church were mounting, they decided unanimously that it was time to look for a full-time pastor.

Although Lord of the Harvest was considered the first Filipino congregation, it was not a part of any umbrella organization owing to the different religious backgrounds and previous country of employment of the members. Not all of them came directly from the Philippines. Others were recruited in the Middle East, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. But, in order to avail the services of a Pastor, they would have to choose which organization they would want to fall under. So they approached the Church of God. Since Word International Ministries started in the Philippines and used to be under the Church of God, the latter recognized that the Filipino ministry

falls under the jurisdiction of WIN Ministries and forwarded the request to WIN. For WIN Ministry to process the request for a Pastor, the Lord of the Harvest Church must first affiliate with them. In 2002, the Church formally affiliated with WIN and the search for a pastor began.

Sometime in 2003, their Church was vandalized and their instruments burned. This prompted them to look for another venue. In August 2003 they rented one of the function rooms at the Ripley Court Hotel on Talbot Street near Connolly Station, also located at the City Center, for their worship service. It became their home for the next four years.

By the time the pastor arrived on October 18, 2003, the Church had grown to about 80 members, but only 6 of those were children, indicating the rarity of family reunification before 2004. This was partly due the job insecurity of nurses at that time and the lack of entitlement to work of spouses prior to March 2004.

The growth of the Church

During the early days of the Church, the members were mostly Filipino workers. Having a Church composed mostly of Filipinos was a big draw in itself. Other factors that contributed to its growth were its location, advertising campaign, word-of-mouth (invitation), and family reunification. The Church was initially located at the City Center's Moore St., and later transferred to the Ripley Court Hotel, which was also at the City Center. These locations were a big draw because the members could do other things before or after Church service.

Adding to the attraction is the notion of permanence of the Church by having a regular church service, Pastor, and place of worship. The Church was thankful to Mr. Frank Ruane, an Irishman and Manager of the Ripley Court Hotel, whose support ensured that the Church had a permanent home for 4 years. In those four years not

once did he raise the rent of the Church. He also gave the Church deep discount rate for the two additional rooms they rented with the arrival of young children and toddlers, charging only €60 per room instead of the normal €145. On three occasions, he donated an entire month's rent for the Church: one for a nurse who died; another for a calamity in Quezon Province; and another for the Church Christmas party, especially for the purpose of providing sweets for the kids.

Advertising was also a big help. Church leaders posted flyers at ethnic Filipino stores. They sought and were granted permission to post notices about the Church by the management of the hospitals where some of the members worked.

The festive atmosphere of their Church service also made it easy for members to invite their co-workers. A typical invitation from friends would sound like, "Follow me. Let's go there (church). It is merry there!" Other nationalities were also invited by Filipino co-workers to join the Church, including nationals from Mauritius and India. Eventually the Indians, like the Filipinos in Victory Church, left to put up their own Church.

Family reunification and its consequence – natural increase– were also very influential in the continued growth of the Church. Contributing to the hastening of the family reunification of Church members was the Pastor's constant exhortation emphasizing the importance of family togetherness in Christian life. The trials he had to go through to bring his family became a testimony to the members on the value of family togetherness. It took almost three years and two visa rejections before his wife and children were finally able to join him. The first visa rejection occurred because he had not met the one year residency requirement and the Church had not been registered. The second rejection was because his income was insufficient to meet the income requirement for reunification. The Church Council raised the Pastor's allowance to meet the income needed for the reunification of a family of three and on

their third try they were successful. This good news reverberated throughout the Church and he entitled his first sermon (upon learning of the news) "*Breakthrough*." In the sermon he told the members that God allowed him to personally go through this trial of nearly three years of separation from his family so he could relate to them because he had been through the process. He added that it was God's desire for families to be together. God does not want their families to be separated and dreams destroyed.

He also challenged his members to weigh the costs of their decision not to bring their families:

> "Some church members reasoned out to me that if they bring their families here, first of all the rent is high, and the college tuition is high. All of that are true! But, at what cost? Do you think Christians are exempted from temptation? How many of our brothers and sisters have fallen? They have families in the Philippines. Even their lovers have families in the Philippines. Two families are destroyed right away. I am not saying that it is guaranteed that those things will not happen once your family is here, but at least you are together for richer, for poorer. Certainly in the Philippines you can easily afford a nice place there. You can have a new house built, a row of apartments built. You can afford two maids to attend to the needs of your family. True. Here there is no maid. You have to do everything yourselves. One of you has to sacrifice looking after children on the daytime. One of you have to work at the nighttime so that at least one adult will take turns looking after the children, but at least you are together… together. Rather than either one or both of you will fall into temptation and the children are growing up delinquents, poor concept of family, bad behavior. These are consequences of separated migrants and their families."

Members were encouraged by the Pastor's testimony and despite being uncertain whether their applications would be approved or not, they submitted an application to reunite their families. On February 1, 2007, Ireland lifted the income

requirement for reunification and this led to a growth spurt in the Church, as applications of members for family reunification were approved one after another and their family members started arriving. As some were able to bring their children from the Philippines, by 2008, the number of young people in the Church, including toddlers, was estimated to be between 50 and 60. The Church had to rent additional rooms in the Hotel for the use of young children and toddlers. The arrival of spouses had led also to a baby boom in the Church prompting the Pastor at one point to preach a sermon on the pregnant Church.

Branching out

The Lord of the Harvest Church lost some of its members because some left Ireland due to their job insecurity and spouses' lack of entitlement at that time; and on two occasions some members decided to start their own church. On one occasion, some members wanted the church service in the Philippine's native language, *Tagalog*, but the missionary church planter disagreed. She reasoned that they needed to reach out to other people not just Filipinos. Since they were in Ireland, they needed to use English, as it would be difficult to witness and evangelize if they did not use English. About eight members were not persuaded, however, and proceeded to establish their own church with a service in Tagalog. That Church also grew and eventually had to switch to English because non-Filipinos joined the Church. On another occasion, a spouse of one of the members used to be a pastor in the Philippines, and he talked to the leaders about putting up his own church. The Church leaders gave their blessings, as he could help reach other people that their Church could not reach.

D. The Filipino Forum – The first ethnic Filipino newspaper in Ireland

The Filipino Forum is the lone Filipino newspaper in Ireland for Filipinos and about Filipinos. It was started by Michael Ancheta in 2002. Although MRCI was already established at that time, the general Filipino population did not have sources of information regarding issues that directly affected them. He established the Filipino Forum as a means to disseminate information pertaining to immigration issues and other concerns of Filipinos. As a Forum, he envisioned it to be a space not just for issue awareness, but also for Filipinos to express their views and concerns regarding various issues or problems that confront them. That forum did not materialize. He observed that Filipinos just want to receive information not share their views or raise issues. He added, "they become noisy people only if they become personally affected like if it affects their job, status, or families in Ireland, such as when their spouse couldn't work in Ireland." Instead many of the issues raised and the information presented came from the writers. Those coming from the Filipino communities were mostly compilations of their activities in between circulation.

From just a one-man crew, the Filipino Forum grew to 3 to 4 all-volunteer staff. Mr. Ancheta managed the Forum for about two years and transferred the management to Vicenta Kennedy, a Filipina married to an Irish man, who wrote for and acted as assistant coordinator of the Forum when Mr. Ancheta was still managing it. The Forum's volunteers did everything from lay-outing, writing, printing, and everything else that is required to produce and market the Forum. Sometimes they earned some money, but it was too little to compensate for the efforts that they had invested in producing the paper. According to him, that was a real service to the Filipino people in Ireland.

Although started by a private individual, the Filipino Forum is managed and operated by volunteers. Management is not permanent and is passed on to volunteers

who would like to take on the challenge of managing the Forum. Just as Mike passed on the management to Vicenta, so Vicenta is searching for someone to take over her place. At present the Forum has an Editor-in-Chief, an Advertising Manager, a Circulation Manager, Production Manager, and a host of other contributors of photos and articles.

The Filipino Forum today sports a glossy look and is multicolor. Back when Mr. Ancheta started it, he made about 200 photocopies of the Forum in black and white using his own money, which he said was not much -- about 50 Euros. The Forum's appearance was criticized by some Filipinos as shameful compared to ethnic newspapers of other nationalities that were colored and printed on glossy paper. The critics urged the Forum's volunteers to improve the look of the paper so that it could attract more readers and be at par with, if not better, than the others. Since this production would entail additional costs, they approached various ethnic Filipino businesses and those whose interests intersected with those of Filipinos, like recruitment agencies, to advertise. From an initial circulation of 200 photocopies in black and white, the Forum today has a circulation of 4,000 copies, printed in glossy paper, multicolor, and sold for 1 Euro. Their original plan was to come up with a Filipino Forum every two months, but due to the volunteers' busy schedules and very little news contribution from the Filipino Community, in some years they could only come up with 4 or 5 issues.

Summary and Discussion

The Evolution and Role of Ethnic Filipino Businesses

All Filipinos who arrived in Ireland beginning in 2000 were economic migrants and possessed either work permits or visas. By Irish law they were not permitted to engage in business. They had to adhere to their contract to work with the

same employer or within the same sector for the duration stipulated. Non-EU migrant workers were permitted to engage in business in Ireland if they were married to an Irish national, or in a business partnership with one, or if they had more than €40,000 start-up capital. According to those interviewed for this research, the first ethnic Filipino entrepreneurs in Ireland were set-up by Filipinos married to Irish nationals. In the case of one Filipino, it was through negotiations of her former employer with financial institutions that her business arose. Thus, state policies and access to capital are the main reasons why only a select few Filipinos were able to establish a business in Ireland during the peak migration period between 2000 through 2003.

From the narrative of the pioneers, none of them had any experience in business management *prior to their arrival* in Ireland. Most of them were housewives or domestic helpers. One was a former city mayor in the Philippines while others worked as sales workers. Once they arrived in Ireland, they took risks by establishing businesses. Prior to establishing an ethnic Filipino business such as a grocery store, restaurant, hair salon, and Balikbayan Box (courier service), they were first engaged in other types of business activities in Ireland. Three were recruiters of Filipino workers, one owned a café at the Temple Bar, and another managed a travel agency. One took risks by getting involved in human smuggling.

The risk-taking behavior of these ethnic entrepreneurs needs to be situated in its socio-economic, cultural, and political context. With a culture of migration already pervasive in the Philippines, a very risky decision – to migrate for economic reasons—has seemed less risky. For them to leave their families behind in pursuit of their family goals, points to a certain tolerance for risk. All Filipinos who went to Ireland as economic migrants were risk takers to a certain extent. Only a select few were able to take the risk of establishing a business, because Irish state policies (work visa/permit restrictions), high start-up capital, and difficulty in accessing capital (e.g.,

loans from banks) prevented the majority of migrants from being able to establish a business.

What is noteworthy is that access to the resources available to pioneer entrepreneurs to start a business was often due to their partnership with an Irish citizen, either through marriage, as a business partner, or as loan guarantor. Studies of enclave economies have investigated the formation of ethnic entrepreneurs, but generally in the context of already existing enclave economies. Thus, co-ethnic solidarity or strong ethnic institutions were an important component in their formation (Portes (1987). In the context of Filipino migration to Ireland where pioneer migrants are either marriage or economic migrants, businesses were initially established without the presence of strong ethnic institutions. Nascent Filipino business establishments arose primarily through the support of local Irish citizens. Filipinos would have been denied access to resources were it not for the intervention of local citizens. For example, case in point is Siony, owner of Pinoy Sari-Sari Store, could not have raised the €40,000 start-up capital needed to put up the business if it were not for her employer who guaranteed her loan. Other than through marriage, the evolution of the first ethnic Filipino businesses was facilitated by way of the support of Irish citizens.

The growth and stability of ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland is maintained through the patronage of co-nationals who use the products and services that these businesses provide. Filipinos were drawn to these businesses because they made available popular Filipino food or cooking ingredients that were not previously available locally, but were important to Filipinos as part of the preservation and celebration of their culture. The services that the ethnic Filipino business provided, such as the courier service and remittance centers were vital to the maintenance of ties with families left behind. Without the infrastructure laid down by a *balikbayan* box service provider, which the manager had to personally oversee during its initial stages

by flying back to the Philippines and understanding the whole process, from dealing with Philippine customs to the delivery of packages, the volume of in-kind remittances of Filipinos would have been severely restricted and subject to the weight limitations of the airline industry.

Bounded solidarity and reciprocity were the types of social capital responsible for the sustained growth of the ethnic Filipino businesses. Bounded by shared national origin and sense of oneness with co-nationals, Filipinos patronize these businesses and ensure their growth and stability. Filipinos are also grateful, enthusiastic, and proud about the emergence of these ethnic Filipino businesses. For their part, owners of ethnic Filipino businesses protect the name and reputation of their businesses to attract Filipinos and they actively support Filipino community activities and social events. Some of them sponsor shows featuring famous entertainers from the Philippines, ballroom dancing, singing contests, or recreational sports such as a basketball league. They fund the events or contribute to the prizes, usually in the form of gift certificates or vouchers which the winners will have to spend in their stores (Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Almost all of these establishments also have allocated a space on their walls where Filipinos can freely post all sorts of announcements. For example, shown in in Figure 7.3 is a photo of the wall of the Pinoy Sari-Sari Store in Dun Laoghaire. The photograph shows flyers or advertisements of rooms for rent; for sale signs for video console and games, house and lot, real estate, and digital phone; business cards for moving service, pants repair, photography, van for hire, catering, tango dance lessons; and also a flyer of the Bahay Kubo Restaurant. In return for the generosity of the ethnic Filipino businesses, the Filipino community publicly acknowledges the support that these businesses provide for community activities and they encourage members to patronize the stores. A symbiotic relationship exists between community networks and ethnic businesses.

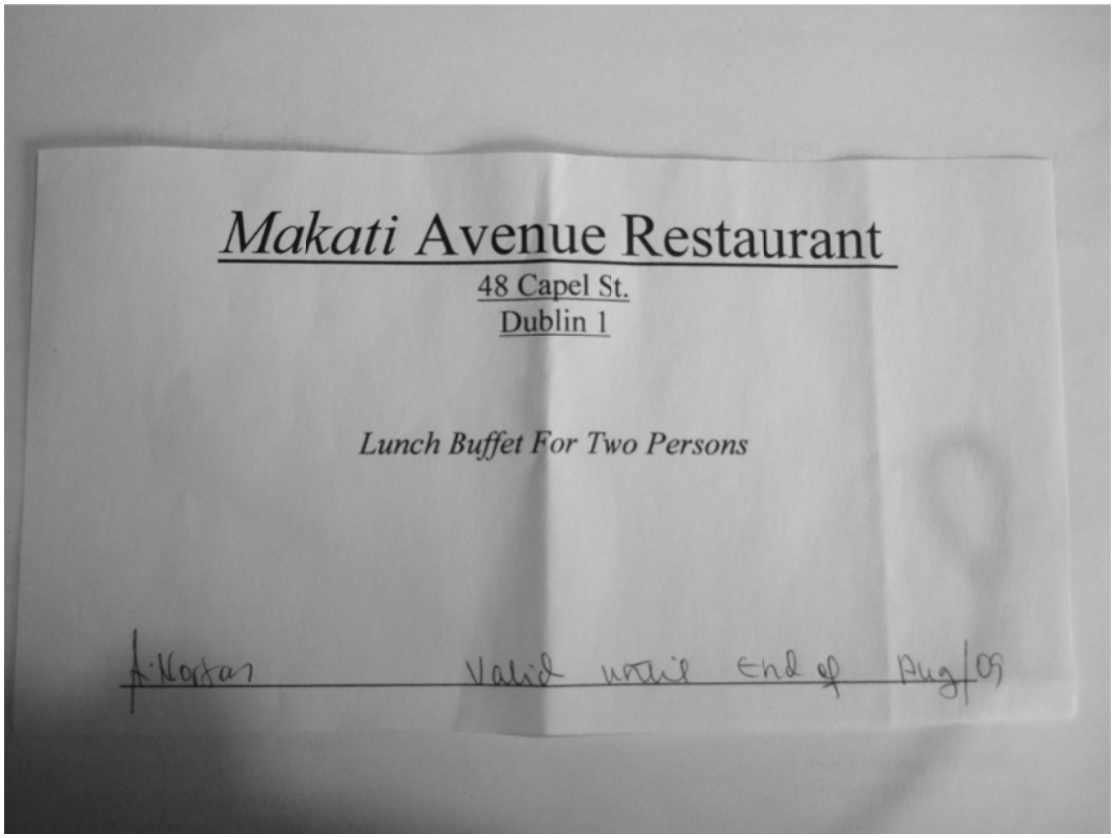


Figure 7.1. Photo showing a gift certificate from Makati Avenue as prize for the South Dublin Filipino Association Bingo Socials.

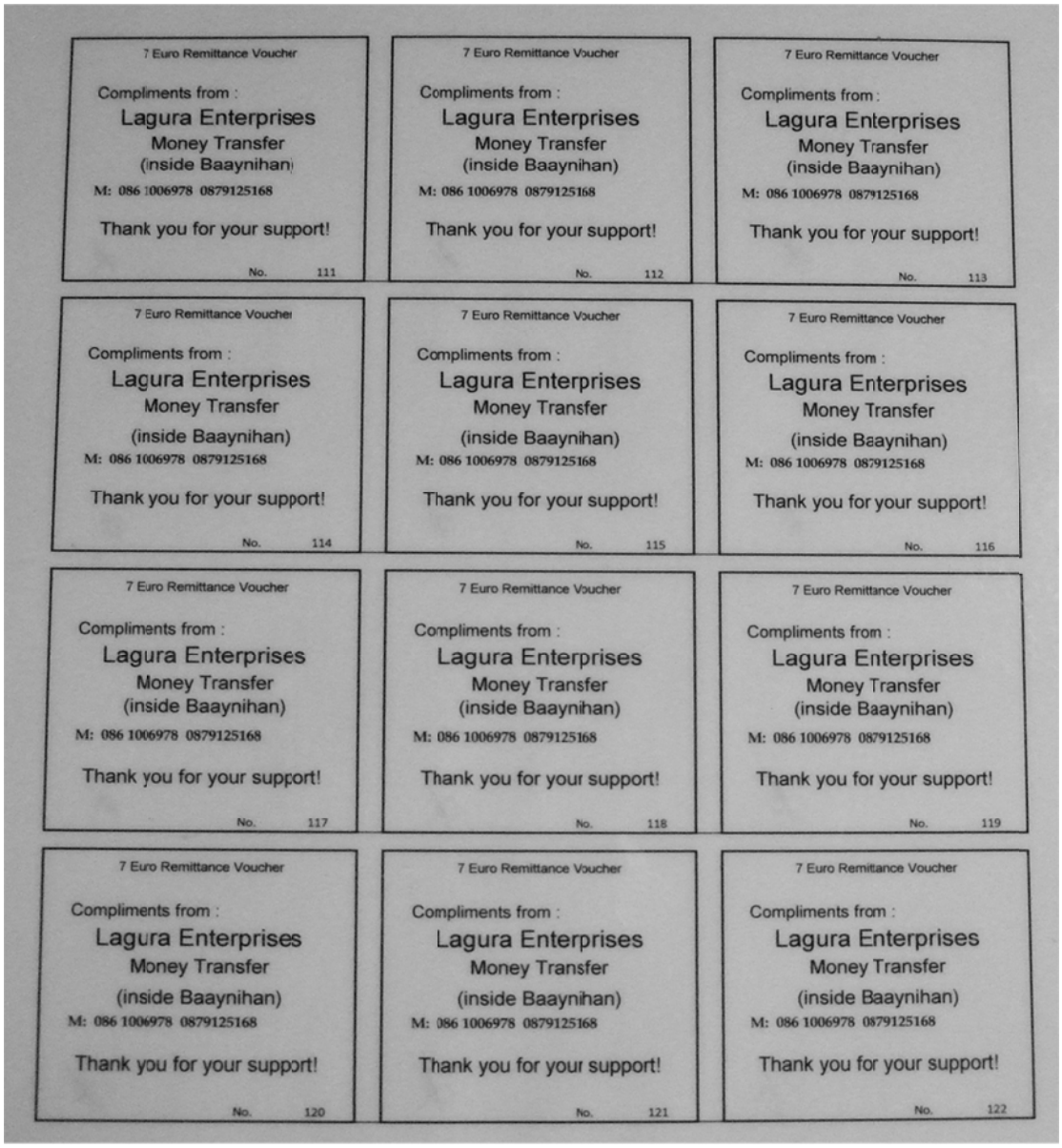


Figure 7.2. Photo showing a gift certificate from Lagura Enterprises, a remittance company, as prize for the South Dublin Filipino Association Bingo Socials.

Figure 7.3. Photo showing the wall of Pinoy Sari-Sari Store in Dun Laoghaire, Ireland littered with advertisements, flyers, and business cards from Filipinos in the area.

It is still too early to tell whether a Filipino enclave will form in Ireland, but if one does, the interviews with the owners and managers of the pioneering ethnic Filipino business in Ireland will help provide an historical overview of how an ethnic enclave can begin to form. There are tell-tale signs that the process is, in fact, underway, but its progress is slow given the (small) size of the Filipino population in Ireland, and also because of restrictions imposed by Ireland's employment policy. The signs point to the fact that the primary market of all these establishments, except for one (Bahay Kubo restaurant), are Filipinos; and the owners prefer to hire Filipino

workers because of their English language skills that enable them to communicate to English speaking clients, including the Irish. Also slowing the progress of the formation of a Filipino enclave is Ireland's policy requiring businesses to have at least a 60:40 EU to Non-EU employee ratio (i.e., no less than 60 percent of the workforce of all businesses in Ireland should be citizens of Ireland or other EU/EEA countries.) All ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland comply with this policy. However, the ethnic composition of the employees of these businesses is expected to shift in favor of Filipinos as more and more Filipinos become long-term residents and/or naturalized citizens. As naturalized citizens, they could replace the Irish and EU/EEA employees and transform an ethnic Filipino business into a business run by an all-Filipino workforce. In addition, long-term residents and naturalized citizens could opt to put up their own businesses, as they are exempted from the €300,000 start-up capital currently required of non-EU nationals to start a business in Ireland. The propensity to start a business has grown rapidly in recent years precisely because many Filipinos have gained long-term residency status. In 2001, there was only one Balikbayan Box service provider (courier service); now there are 12. Four courier service providers are planning to consolidate to stay competitive.

Since the acquisition of long-term residency or naturalization is virtually inevitable, especially for Filipinos who have worked in Ireland for more than five years, many have made the necessary preparations, consciously or unconsciously, that would enhance their chances of starting a business after changing their residency or citizenship status in Ireland. Building their credit history was one of the reasons Filipinos applied for and used their credit cards, borrowed from banks, mortgaged their homes. They anticipated that a healthy credit score would be valuable if and when the need for cash were to arise. Others have teamed up or are teaming up to consolidate their resources so their businesses can compete with established ones.

While it is important to follow the development of businesses to understand the dynamics of ethnic economy formation, to study the demise of businesses (and its impact) is also important. Prior to my fieldwork, I was informed by my key informants that a remittance center closed because the owner failed to transfer the money to the intended recipients, but instead ran away with it. Since the owner is unreachable, the story of how it evolved and the full array of reasons for its demise are lost forever. It is clear, however, that it had significant impact on the Filipino community, as it served as a wake-up call to Filipinos to be extra careful when sending home their hard earned money. This is partly why there are only a handful of remittance centers serving Filipinos in Ireland. New Filipino businesses, such as grocery stores, would rather house satellite offices of well-known and trusted remittance centers than put up their own, because it takes time to build trust – a key foundation in transactional relations.

The evolution and role of ethnic Filipino associations

The ethnic Filipino associations in Ireland were formed from the coming together of clusters of Filipinos in the context of a multicultural society that allowed them to flourish, and as a result of the rising number of Filipinos arriving through family reunification and its concomitant natural increase. The formation of ethnic Filipino associations was either sparked by people (the priest and nun), events (the donation can incident), or a split in an organization perhaps (the losing election candidate). The coming together of these clusters is synonymous with Faist's (1999) description of ethnic communities as a network of networks or organizations. The formation of these associations, however, challenges the view that a certain level of residential concentration is needed for the establishment of associations (Owusu, 2002). The coming together of the clusters from all over Galway to form the GFC,

and the establishment of the KIA with members spread all over Ireland are proof that residential concentration is not a critical factor for the establishment of associations. Regular opportunities for bonding moments are important, however, as the once-monthly Filipino mass in Galway illustrates.

Three types of associations are common in Ireland – hometown, host-town, and religious. Hometown associations focus their social and development programs on their origin community and their members are spread all over Ireland. Host-town associations do not have a fixed community beneficiary in the Philippines and their members mostly live and work in or near the area where their associations are based. Religious organizations also have widely dispersed membership in Ireland and usually have pre-determined beneficiaries based on their partnership with specific institutions in the Philippines, as in the case of the CFC Ireland – Gawad Kalinga partnership, and the WIN Ministry Ireland – WIN Philippines Seeds of Hope partnership. The transnational social and development programs of these associations have contributed to institutionalization of ties between them and the origin/beneficiary communities, and between Ireland and the Philippines in general.

Like what was observed in Hispanic and Ghanaian HTAs (Orozco, 2000; Owusu, 2002), the ethnic Filipino associations have social, economic, cultural, and political functions. The main purpose for the formation of the ethnic Filipino associations is to unite Filipinos in Ireland. They serve as a mouthpiece for migrants on issues pertinent to migrant workers in Ireland. They advocate for migrant rights. Filipinos also join associations to develop strong friendships with their co-nationals. These friendships are forged through regular socialization organized by the associations such as parties, games, and recreational sports (bingo social, raffle, basketball, volleyball, and badminton).

Ethnic associations serve to showcase and preserve Filipino culture in Ireland through their observation of the feast of the patron saint of their origin community, participation in cultural shows, participation in St. Patrick's Day's parade showing Filipino dances, costumes, and cultural icons such as the jeepney; and the omnipresence of Filipino food in all their activities. They contribute to the incorporation of Filipinos in Irish society by actively participating in the activities of their localities, such as participation in local St. Patrick's Day Parade, voting in local elections, and attendance at local council meetings. They provide assistance to members who are looking for jobs or accommodation. As one economic function, they provide soft loans and social insurance to their members. They also have social and development programs directed toward their home communities or to beneficiary communities/NGOs of their own choosing. For example, hometown associations focus their programs in their origin community, while host-town associations, owing to the diverse community origins in the Philippines of their members, often have no geographic preference. In fact, to be fair to everyone, some left the selection of beneficiaries to chance as in the case of the "name a public school" contest of the Sligo-Leitrim Filipino Community.

The main challenges faced by these associations pertain to membership participation, funding, and trust in leadership which are critical to the success and stability of the associations. Most members support their association by going to the events organized by them. However, their participation in the preparations for these events leaves much to be desired. In terms of funding, the associations have divergent views about membership dues and social insurance such as burial assistance. Some associations collect membership dues, while others avoid them. Some collect burial assistance, while others consider it unnecessary. Associations that collect membership dues, however, only collect minimal amounts and have to supplement

their funds with fund raising activities, such as caroling, grocery bag-packing, raffle, and bingo socials. As much as possible they bring to a minimum the out-of-pocket expenses of members. This leads to the third challenge, running an organization under a culture of distrust. Well-meaning leaders distance themselves from matters that involve money directly coming from their members. Thus, many of them shy away from collecting membership dues; instead they organize other forms of fund raising. This culture of distrust can be traced to the culture of corruption entrenched in Philippine politics and governance. Thus, even association leaders are not spared from suspicion or doubt in handling the coffers of the organization.

The giving behavior of members of the association seems to differ by type of beneficiary. They give less when the beneficiary is a single individual or family (private), and more if the beneficiaries are many individuals/families (public), or if they are in need because of a climatic or other significant triggering event. The giving behavior also differs depending on the religiosity of the members. Members of religious associations appear to give substantially more aid than members of non-religious associations. Furthermore, the giving behavior also differs depending on the type of recipients or facilitators of the aid. Among the three institutions (church, non-government, and government) that could possibly be recipients of aid from ethnic Filipino associations, the Church is the most trusted. Unlike the Church, NGOs are not as trusted and would require an acknowledgement receipt. The Philippine government is not trusted at all. This is in contrast to some Hispanic HTAs found by Orozco (2000) to have partnered with local governments. The Philippine government has a serious image problem that needs to be repaired if it wants to leverage the resources of the associations for its development programs. The giving behavior of ethnic Filipino associations bodes well for Philippine Churches seeking funding for their programs, however.

The social and development programs of these associations are often left to be determined by the leaders. While a culture of distrust remains pervasive, this is usually limited to money matters. In the determination of programs, the leadership usually has a free hand because members, though invited, cannot be relied upon to show up in meetings. Members are usually just informed about the programs of the association after the fact, usually during a general assembly.

In programs of an urgent nature, such as donations to victims of calamities or natural disasters, the associations usually partner with a religious order. In other programs they partner with NGOs that have tremendous social capital that has been earned through familiarity and a proven track record. The foundations of two leading television networks in the Philippines and the Gawad Kalinga are examples.

The evolution and role of other support institutions

Apart from ethnic Filipino establishments and associations, other infrastructures have evolved to support Filipinos in Ireland. At first glance, the first Filipino Christian Church came about because Filipino Christians (non-Catholics) converged and decided to form a Church. However, a closer examination has shown that the Church was a transnational Church-planting project of the Word International Ministry (WIN).

The rise in the number of Filipino Christians arriving in Ireland had a profound effect in the formation of the first Filipino Christian Church. Initially, Filipino Christians worshipped and integrated with Christian Churches in Ireland, but as their numbers grew they withdrew and formed their own. This behavior is not unique to Filipinos. During the early days of the Filipino Church, Mauritians and Indians worshipped with them. Solidarity in terms of faith and co-minority status seemed to be the reasons why Indians and Mauritians preferred to worship with the

Filipinos rather than with the Irish. Eventually, however, the Indians also withdrew and formed their own Church, as more of their co-ethnics arrived.

Several factors have contributed to the growth and stability of the Church. For one, the Church is very practical. Considering the cost of running a Church, they shared the church with another Christian denomination from Africa. Second, the Church is a religious syncretism, a coming together of Filipino Christians from various denominations who banded together based on their common core beliefs and setting aside their differences, which had the effect of increasing their numbers. Third, by affiliating with WIN they are assured of continuous support from the international headquarters of WIN Ministry, including the services of the Church pastor. Fourth, the support of Irish citizens is also crucial. The Lord of the Harvest Church was able to have an affordable "home" for four years because of the support of the Ripley Court Hotel Manager. Fifth, family reunification not only increased the number of members who came directly from the Philippines, but also led to a baby boom with the arrival of the spouses. The pro-family unity stance of the Church has helped tremendously in encouraging the migrants to reunite with their families. Lastly, Church members attribute the growth and stability of the Church to prayers and the grace of God.

The Church not only became a place of worship and fellowship of Filipino Christians. It also became a venue for Filipinos to contribute transnationally through their Seeds of Hope program and scholarships in the Philippines.

The Catholic Church was also instrumental in putting up institutions and services in support of migrants. These institutions are largely voluntary and have few economic interests in helping the migrants. First, having served in the Philippines for 33 years in their Redemptorist Mission, Fr. Pat O' Connell occasionally invites Filipino nurses for fellowship. As a result of his consistent

dealings with Filipino migrants, he was eventually designated the Chaplain of the Filipino people. As Chaplain, he provides the usual services such as officiating masses, baptisms, marriages, and house blessings. He visits Filipinos at their homes and places of work, asking how they have been. However, on many occasions, people come to him for help with all types of problems, including immigration-related ones, such as work permits or failing the adaptation tests. As a Chaplain, Filipinos expect that he will help or do his best to find resolution to their problems, perhaps, by referring them to appropriate agencies or people. Through Fr. Pat, a Filipino mass was also institutionalized once a month in four counties, yet he also contributed to migrants' integration into Irish society by rejecting the suggestion that he do a regular Sunday Filipino mass.

Secondly, the Catholic Church in Ireland has played a role similar to that of the Catholic Church in Barcelona, Spain which established Centro Filipino, a migrants rights advocacy group. Through the program of the Columbans, the Catholic Church in Ireland established MRCI, an organization that was initially created to provide information services to migrants, and evolved into a rights advocacy group. MRCI grew because of dedicated volunteers and staff, increased funding from the Columbans, and international recognition of their advocacy work, which brought in more funding from international organizations.

MRCI has established a system for addressing the issues of migrants that has allowed them to navigate the bureaucracy. Because of their years of experience in handling cases involving migrants, typically they already know the appropriate agencies and people to contact. Their research and advocacy work has raised awareness about the plight of migrant workers, such as those in domestic work, and in many cases has resulted in favorable policy changes. As an institutional network,

MRCI has become known to migrants and can be relied upon to be on their side fighting for their rights.

These support institutions worked for the continued or extended stay of migrants and toward the improvement of their living condition in Ireland. The six-week extension of the period of adaptation and assessment resulting from Fr. O'Connell's advocacy gave chances to others. Even if they were to fail again, he was there to help in locating other jobs for them. MRCI's advocacy has liberated employees from their contracts with abusive employers. Their bridging visa campaign has provided abused or redundant workers a 3-6 months extension so that they may find another job in Ireland that will grant them a work permit or visa. Their support in the successful campaign that granted work entitlement to spouses of migrant workers helped hasten and stabilize family reunification in Ireland.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This dissertation has examined the emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system, the factors shaping it, and the emergence of migration industry, migrant networks, ethnic businesses, ethnic associations, and other support infrastructures. It has also investigated the experiences of Filipino nurses and their families as they went through the process of family reunification, their transnational practices to maintain ties with their relatives in the Philippines, and the role reconfigurations in the household division of labor resulting from their migration. This thesis is the first known study to examine comprehensively the emergence of the system and the structures that are the building blocks for its stability and resiliency over time. How these structures emerged and the experiences of transnational families were described in great detail because this study also serves as an important historical documentation of how the *brown Irish* came to be in Ireland. I envision that 50, 75, 100 years down the line, researchers will use this as a resource to gain understanding about how the Filipino structures in Ireland evolved and how Filipino pioneers lived during this period.

The Emerging Philippines-Ireland Migration System

The emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system started in the year 2000 at the height of the Celtic Tiger, a period of sustained economic growth in Ireland. During this period Ireland was in short supply of English-speaking, low-skilled and highly skilled workers, especially nurses, and they could not fill these shortages from within Europe. The ten incoming Accession State countries were still four years away from joining the EU and, therefore, their nationals were still subject to the same

work restrictions as non-EU/EEA nationals. This shortage opened doors for Filipinos and fueled a recruitment frenzy for Filipino workers.

Drawn by the market demand for workers, a neophyte migration industry emerged, which was new to the business of recruiting Filipinos. This was evinced by the private nursing home association's search for a liaison in the Philippines who could help them in facilitating the recruitment of nurses and caregivers, and by the reputable Irish-based nurse recruitment agency's request to their client in the Middle East for an introduction to a Philippine-based nurse recruitment agency with whom they might partner because such partnership is required by Philippine law when five or more workers are to be deployed. "Transformers" (Filipino migrants-turned-recruiters) also arose to get a piece of the pie in the lucrative recruitment business.

Three policies of the Philippine state became problematic in the recruitment of workers. One, many employers in Ireland, specifically those needing low-skilled workers, were not amenable to the standard employment contract of the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency that requires among other things, that the employer shoulder the airfare, free dental treatment, and repatriation of remains of the workers. Compliance with this contract was necessary for the issuance of the POEA Overseas Employment Certificate, a clearance needed to exit the country. The Irish employers were often willing, however, only to hire the workers, if they were willing to pay their own way. Two, in the recruitment of nurses for nursing homes, the association was forced by the state to partner with a Philippine-based recruitment agency, which meant increased costs to employers because they would have to pay the partner a recruitment fee for each worker. It would also cost the job candidate nurses up to one month of their salary because Philippine recruitment agencies were allowed to assess a placement fee up to one month of the expected salary in the destination country. This policy of assessing job candidates such a substantial fee was the third problematic

policy. This policy conflicted with Ireland's policy regarding the recruitment of workers that deemed illegal the assessment of placement fees to job candidates. The POEA later addressed this conflict by amending their policy so that placement fees are not to be charged to job candidates bound for countries where the practice of assessing placement fees is prohibited.

As a result, the policies of the Philippine state limited the number of workers who made up the base of this emerging migration system to mostly nurses hired by reputable Irish-based nurse recruitment agencies because their employers were willing to pay all costs. For other types of migrants, state policy increased the risks and costs of migration because it forced some recruitment agencies and also the nursing home association to smuggle both low and high-skilled Filipino workers via an escort service at the country's premier gateway airport. While illegal, the actions of the recruitment agencies helped shore up the base of this emerging migration system by countering the dampening effect of the Philippine state policies. The successful smuggling of workers was unintentionally aided by the Irish state, which did not recognize the POEA's OEC. To enter Ireland, the Irish state only required a work permit or visa, which all the smuggled workers already have.

The policies of the Irish state were instrumental in affecting the deployment of Filipino workers. *First,* the policy in Ireland by which it is illegal to assess placement fees to job candidates led to law suits when some Filipino workers learned of this law and sued their recruiters. One recruitment agency was forced to end its international operations, while another was forced to shut down altogether.

Second, Ireland had a discriminatory family reunification policy where work visa holders can start the process of reunification three months after they have arrived. There is a year of waiting for work permit holders, while recent green card holders can reunite their families on the first day of their employment. This minimum duration of

stay requirement effectively delayed reunification for both work permit and work visa holders, while expediting it for green card holders. The delay was clearly worst for work permit holders because reunification also has a family income requirement, which they often could not fulfill given their low income. It was seven years after the start of the migration of Filipinos in 2000 that the family reunification income requirement was relaxed by the Irish state for work permit holders who had worked in Ireland for at least three years. This policy change led to a tremendous growth in the number of Filipinos in Ireland, as more and more eligible family members started to arrive.

Third, while reunification is a right of migrant workers in Ireland, initially their spouses were not allowed to work, making them totally dependent on the migrant worker. It took nearly four years for this policy to be reversed, and, yet again this occurred in a discriminatory manner that was articulated by economic class. The policy reversal that started in March 2004 allowed spouses of migrant workers to work, but only spouses of work visa holders (professional workers). It took another three years (February 2007) for this same privilege to be extended to spouses of work permit holders (low-skilled workers). The lack of entitlement to work delayed the reunification of many or made reunification temporary because of the difficulty of having (or being) a totally dependent spouse. Most of the dependents were men because of the predominance of women in the nursing profession (82 percent) in this migration stream. It was also during this period (prior to March 2004) when over 900 nurses left Ireland; in many cases this was because their spouses could not work, their initial two-year contracts were almost due to expire, and their employers were slow to act on giving them permanent employment status. Because over 900 nurses voted with their feet, this threatened and proved costly to the Irish health care system. It contributed to the granting of permanency status to most of those who stayed. Rather

than hiring and training new nurses, which are costly, Irish employers decided to retain their workers and gave them permanency status. This permanent job status has been instrumental for the continued presence of Filipino nurses and their families in Ireland.

Fourth, in May 2004, the EU 10 Accession states formally joined the EU and their nationals were given permission to work in Ireland. This effectively closed all low-skilled positions to Filipinos wishing to work in Ireland. Thus since May 2004 the character of the workers deployed by the Philippines to Ireland has consisted mostly of professionals, a great majority of whom were nurses.

Fifth, Ireland's ethical recruitment policy for nurses led to global nurse recruitment drives, which increased the Irish state's source countries for nurses. Since perhaps the most common complaint and cause of failure in the period of adaptation and assessment was communication skills, on July 1, 2003 the An Bord Altranais (Irish Nursing Board) introduced the International English Language Testing Service requirement initially with 6.5 minimum band score. On average, only three of five nurses were able to achieve this score. They further increased the minimum score to 7.0 on April 1, 2007, which on average, only one of three nurses could pass. The ABA was emboldened to be selective because they then had many source countries for nurses. The introduction of IELTS policy had a negative effect in the deployment of Filipino nurses. From 2000-2003, the Philippines led the field among the new nurse registrants in Ireland, but from 2004 onwards, India took over, at least in part due to the fact that large numbers of Indian nurses achieved the required minimum IELTS score. Indian nurses were also less costly to recruit due to India's geographic proximity to Ireland. Many were also exempted from the six-week period of assessment because their curriculum fit with Irish health care system. As a result, they could directly register with ABA and start working on day one, which was a huge

enticement for employers. Filipinos, on the other hand, had to take a six-week period of adaptation and assessment, and an extension of six more weeks if they were to fail, before they could be added to the register of ABA and start working for their employers.

Migrant networks have also contributed to shaping this emerging migration system. Soon after their arrival in Ireland, migrants started acting as bridgeheads, searching for jobs for their relatives and friends back in the Philippines. Those who were married were particularly actively searching for jobs for their spouses. It was necessary to find them jobs because at that time spouses did not have entitlement to work, unless they could secure their own work permits. It was also costly to maintain two households, one in Ireland and another in the Philippines particularly if the spouse were unemployed. Some of these bridgeheads remarkably recommended colleagues to their employers without the knowledge of their colleagues. Those who had been recommended were surprised to learn about it when a recruiter contacted them with job offer. However, not all networks were neither that remarkable nor that helpful. Some migrants acted as gatekeepers. They would find jobs for others, usually from their origin community, but charge them finders' fees, sometimes more exorbitant than those recruitment agencies are allowed to assess. Their actions often channeled migration from their origin community to Ireland, and thus influenced the character of migration.

The social networks that have made very important contributions to the growth and stability of this emerging system and have been largely neglected in the literature are those made up of Irish employers and citizens. Irish employers value the recommendation of their Filipino employees, especially those who are performing well. Whenever additional workers were needed, their employees were ready and willing to provide them with job candidates. Irish employers were also responsible for

giving permanence and stability to many migrant Filipino workers in Ireland. Employers of nurses granted them permanent status which secured their employment. Employers of work permit holders continued to renew their contracts annually, oftentimes relenting to the pleading of their employees who would promise to spare the employer from paying the work permit fee provided they renew their contract. This constant renewal allowed many work permit holders in Ireland to qualify for long-term residency and naturalization, thereby giving more permanence to their stay in Ireland. It was also an Irish citizen who contributed immensely to the growth of the first Filipino Christian Church by ensuring a home for the Church for four years. Irish citizens were also a big factor in the establishment of the pioneer ethnic Filipino businesses in Ireland.

The rise in Filipino population in Ireland eventually reached a critical mass that allowed ethnic Filipino businesses to emerge. Pioneer ethnic Filipino businesses that were established in Ireland were all owned by Filipinos married to Irish nationals or by Filipinos with a powerful Irish backer. By being married to an Irish citizen they were able to waive the €40,000 minimum business startup capital required at that time for non-EU/EEA nationals to engage in business in Ireland. One Filipina was able to raise the start-up capital required because her Irish backer stood as the loan guarantor for half the money she needed to put up a business. This again demonstrates the importance of Irish citizens in the beginning stages of this emerging migration system. In addition to start-up capital requirements, visa restrictions also prevented work permit and work visa holders from going into business. Only long-term residents or naturalized citizens from non-EU/EEA countries were able to engage in businesses absent the required start-up capital. These are the reasons why only a select few Filipinos were able to put up a business in the beginning stages of the system – immigration policy (visa restrictions) and economic policy (start-up capital) conspired

to limit their number. As more and more Filipinos were granted long-term residency and naturalization, however, the number of ethnic Filipino business establishments increased. For example, in 2001 there was only one *balikbayan* box service provider, but by 2010 there were eleven.

The pioneer ethnic Filipino businesses flourished because their products and services catered to the specific needs of the Filipinos in maintaining and sustaining a transnational life. Reciprocity transactions were also important for the success of these businesses. These businesses actively supported the programs of various ethnic Filipino associations and the latter in turn patronized their businesses. They generally also have a community billboard inside their stores where community members can post all sorts of announcements for free.

As the number of Filipinos rose with the arrival of new hires, family reunification, and concomitant natural increase, ethnic Filipino associations also evolved in parts of Ireland. These associations initially started from clusters of Filipinos who came together thanks to a spark to form an association by a person (priest/nun), an event (donation can incident), or a split in the organization (losing electoral candidate). Most of these associations were formed six years into the system's formation, in part because of the critical mass needed to form them, reservations from others that the association was not necessary, and the delay in finding the spark that would put everything in motion. The new associations had social, economic, cultural, and political functions. They worked to unite Filipinos and became the mouthpiece of every member on issues that affect them, especially on immigration. They have also fostered strong friendships with co-nationals through social gatherings and sports activities. They have helped showcase Filipino culture, assisted in the incorporation of members in Irish society through their active participation in their local Irish community, provided support to recent and not-so

recent Filipino migrants in the form of social insurance and soft loans, and have generated social and development programs in the Philippines

Three types of ethnic Filipino associations were readily identifiable – hometown, host-town, and religious. Hometown associations are composed of Filipinos coming from the same origin community and their transnational programs are mostly focused in their own community. Host-town associations are composed of Filipinos living near or around their communities in which they live and/or work in Ireland; their transnational programs tend not to be directed to one specific community only, but target those either randomly chosen for fairness, or those supported by a partner with a proven track record. Religious associations are composed of Filipinos who share same faith, and their transnational programs usually work with partner NGOs in the Philippines. These programs help institutionalize the ties between the host and origin communities, and between the Philippines and Ireland more generally. A clear example of this is the establishment of a village in the Philippines, aptly named Irish Gawad Kalinga Village and consisting of 30 housing units, which was funded by the Couples for Christ Chapter in Ireland. A second village is currently under construction.

Funding, membership participation, and trust in leadership were the main challenges in running the associations. The collection of membership dues and social insurance were key fund raising issues that received divergent views from the associations. Some vehemently opposed them, others embraced them. But, all associations try to limit out-of-pocket expenses for their members by raising funds in various ways such as caroling, bingo socials, raffle, and grocery bag packing. A culture of distrust also hovers around the head of the leaders which made them shy away from matters that involved money directly coming from the members. In many cases they use their own money without asking for reimbursement so that there will be

no questions. Despite this culture of distrust, members rely on their leaders to design their programs. This is partly because the members do not attend the meetings when these things are discussed.

Association members have a peculiar giving behavior – they tend to give more if the beneficiaries are public (many individuals/families) versus private (single individual/family). Also, members of religious associations contribute more to their fund raising campaigns than members of non-religious organizations, and all associations appear to put immense trust in the Church, followed by NGOs. There is a complete lack of faith in the government of the Philippines to handle their donations.

The Transnational Lives of Filipino Nurses and their families

One of the priorities of married female nurses after having passed the period of adaptation and assessment was to prepare for the reunification of family members. Ireland's family reunification policy limits reunification to the spouses of nurses and their unmarried children under 18 years old. Other requirements include having health insurance and an average weekly net family income that is high enough so the family will not qualify for social assistance. This income requirement is well within the nurses' earning capacity.

As work visa holders, nurses could start the process of reunification after working three months in Ireland. However, several factors were found to have an effect on the duration of the *separation stage* i.e., the period in which the nurse is in Ireland and none of her family members has rejoined her, including the inability of spouses to work legally. Finding a job for them became crucial once it was permitted because the costs of maintaining a household in Ireland would increase once family members started arriving. Other factors influencing the duration of the separation stage included the security of tenure of the nurses' jobs, the location of the nurses'

place of work or residence, the status of the spouse's occupation or business in the Philippines, family priorities – investments or reunification, age and enrollment status of children in the Philippines, whether the nurse was able to secure a separate work permit for her spouse, Ireland's child benefits program, children's access to education in Ireland, involvement in or suspicion of extra-marital affairs, and other forms of crisis in the family.

Family reunification is a non-linear process and has different trajectories and this was clearly depicted in the experiences of the families of nurses. Some families went through a *partial reunification* stage, usually with the husband joining first to "test the waters," especially given the uncertainty of having no work in Ireland. Children were often left in the care of guardians or the couple's eldest child. Other families went to *outright full reunification*, where the entire family joined the nurse. They reasoned that family togetherness was paramount to them, and they did not want to worry about a family member left behind in the Philippines. Other families transitioned from *partial to full reunification*, which is common in families where spouses had secured a work permit of their own. Some families transitioned from *partial to de-reunification*, often due to the failure of the spouse to secure a work permit of his own. However, most of them returned to Ireland when they were granted entitlement to work in March 2004. Other families transitioned from *full reunification to de-reunification*. This was usually because children were sent back to the Philippines to purse college there because of the steep tuition fee imposed on non-EU/EEA students in Ireland. This also occurred when toddlers or newborn babies were brought back to the Philippines to be cared for by relatives so the parents could concentrate on working full time in Ireland.

These are the factors that have influenced the family reunification of nurses as they have gone through the process of separation, partial, to full reunification, and

sometimes de-reunification. At each stage of the process, however, negotiations and reconfigurations were also happening in the nurses' household division of labor. The departure of the nurses, who are mostly women, had a considerable impact in the reconfiguration of the household division of labor.

In the Philippines women do much of the household tasks, even when employed full time. Such is the case of the married female nurses in the study. Before coming to Ireland most performed the bulk of the reproductive work such as cooking, washing and ironing of clothes, dishwashing, shopping, light cleaning/dusting, managing the household budget, and child minding, especially in the absence of household help. The husband, considered the *padre de familia* (head of the family) and main provider, did the occasional heavy lifting, but hardly took the lead in other household tasks. Teenage girls assisted their mothers in cooking, dishwashing, food preparations, minding younger siblings, and sometimes washing and ironing of clothes. Teenage boys did heavy house cleaning and occasionally ran errands for the household.

Much of this changed when the nurse (wife/mother) left for Ireland. During the separation stage, the husband stepped up and performed most of the roles previously done by their wives. A nurse's substantially higher income in Ireland made possible this shift in role. She and her husband negotiated that he would give up his job to concentrate on looking after their children and household or become a full time "houseband" because her income would more than compensate for his lost income. Instead of hiring household help, which they could easily afford, the resignation of the husband was sought. They came to this decision to avoid temptation and neighborhood gossips. As full-time "housebands", they did much of the household work and child minding. The teenage children's roles were also elevated to help out in the household. While in Ireland, the nurses co-managed the Philippines' household

budget and were actively involved in remittance-spending decisions. They also showed intimacy to their children from afar by constantly communicating with them. Some made early morning calls to wake their children up for school. Sometimes, to compensate for their absence, they would buy their children expensive gifts or accede to their requests.

When husbands joined their wives in Ireland, they often left their children in the care of guardians or their eldest child. The guardian is usually the mother or sister of either parent. Household help is provided to the guardians to assist in caring for the children and in the maintenance of the household. If children are left in the care of the eldest child, household help is hired. Considerable discussion occurs regarding the hiring of a maid, especially if a teenage son is present in the household, again to avoid the delicate matter of temptation and neighborhood gossip. In Ireland, having no entitlement to work, the husbands did most, if not all, of the household tasks. The nurse had to work even harder as two households were being maintained, one in Ireland and the other in the Philippines. To contribute to the household coffers, some “housebands” banded together and devised a rotating child minding arrangement so that every member of the group would have his turn at looking after the other member’s child(ren), while the rest engaged in cash-basis only jobs.

As households move from partial to full reunification with the arrival of the children in Ireland and the employment of the spouse, a noticeable difference in the division of labor in the household takes place. The new arrangement is marked by partnership and cooperation between the couple as they share the tasks of maintaining the household. This may bode well for the future generation of Filipinos as they are socialized in a household that values cooperation between husband and wife.

Clearly, migration has contributed significantly to the changes in social structures and cultural views of Filipinos. However, the Irish state has also had a hand

in reconfiguring these roles. The delay in their decision to reverse the no-work entitlement policy prolonged the husbands' exposure to household tasks giving them ample time to internalize these roles.

The household decision to have the husband resign rather than hire a maid indicates that the global care chain may not apply to families of professional care workers who have the capacity to compensate for the lost income of their husband. Global care chain seems to be a phenomenon more relevant to domestic workers' families, whose incomes are not sufficient for the day-to-day expenses of the household, and not enough to sway their husbands to give up their work so they can concentrate on their children full time. Their husbands are still required to work to contribute to the household and therefore generally require a maid to look after their children. This, however, goes beyond the scope of this paper.

Although nurses can start the process of reunification after three months of working in Ireland, it often took them at least six months, or even years for the first family member to join them. For the lucky few, the arrival of the husband could be hastened if they could secure a work permit for him. During these periods of separation from the entire family or part of the family, they all engaged in transnational practices of communication, visits, and remittances to maintain and sustain their ties across borders.

The most common form of communication during the early years of the migration system (2000) was through long distance telephone calls using a phone card. Since calling from the Philippines to Ireland is more expensive than calling from Ireland to the Philippines, it is often the nurse who makes the call back home. Mobile phones were already available back then and nurses had them, but they were used mainly text or drop-call by relatives in the Philippines to alert the nurse that they wanted to talk her. Telephoning was frequent, sometimes daily, during the early days

of the separation stage, but as the separation and partial reunification dragged on, the frequency diminished. This was mostly attributed to both sides getting accustomed to the absence of the other. Advancements in telecommunications technology, such as the internet, provided alternatives to telephoning which further diminished its frequency. Instant Messengers, such as Skype, with its ability to voice chat and video call, have become the most popular means of communication. An added bonus is the use of the technology is free. The only requirement is an internet connection on both sides of the world.

Nurses also send cash remittances – the main reason why they migrated in the first place. The amount of cash remittances they sent tends to vary with their family reunification status. During the separation stage, cash remittances often amount to more than half of the nurses' salary due to their simple lifestyle and aggressive work ethic. Prior to reunification nurses in this study usually lived in shared accommodations, banked at every opportunity, and some engaged in agency work. Thus, they tended to have high incomes and low costs of living. When their family members started arriving, remittances gradually diminished. The level of remittances is minimally affected when the spouse joins the nurse, as it does not usually result in them renting a place on their own, and their children still require their financial contributions. Once the children started arriving, however, it usually became necessary to rent their own place, and the need to send money to the Philippines diminished.

This study revealed some very remarkable sources of remittances that have not been widely discussed in the literature. Filipino nurses, for the most part, remit cash from their salaries. However, some remit cash from money they withdraw from credit cards or from loans they take out from banks in Ireland, usually to be used for the purchase or improvement of a property in the Philippines. This can have significant

implications for the impact-of-immigrants-on-the-economy debate, as these practices have had the effect of developing both the host and origin economies.

Social capital in the form of mutual expectations and obligations that inhere in family or kinship ties help explain why migrants remit money to the Philippines. Nurses cited the need to help their family financially as their main reason for migrating to Ireland and their family or kinship network expect them to follow through, hence the remittance. Sometimes the demands of the kinship networks became oppressive, however. Some nurses loaned relatives huge sums of money, which they had a hard time repaying in order to stem the flow of requests for further assistance. Similarly, some loaned their relatives money to start a business so that they could become self-sufficient and not ask money anymore.

Nurses also send in-kind remittances and the most common form is the *balikbayan* (homecomers) box offered by freight forwarders. This box has no weight restrictions. The only limit is the box dimensions and it is very popular among Filipinos for bulk gift-giving. The frequency with which nurses sent *balikbayan* boxes to the Philippines diminished with their duration of residence in Ireland and with family reunification status. As the family members started to arrive, the need for a *balikbayan* box faded, as the usual recipients were now in Ireland. However, what kept Filipino nurses continuing to send *balikbayan* boxes every now and then was the baggage allowance limitation imposed by airlines in Ireland, which limits the weight to 20 kilograms. When they have scheduled trips to the Philippines, 20 kilograms are not sufficient for their gifts to relatives, so they send them in advance of their trip via a *balikbayan* box. Others, however, found the cost of the *balikbayan* box to be prohibitive and decided to buy their gifts once they were back in the Philippines.

Visits are the least frequent (because of cost), but most memorable form of transnational practice that nurses use to maintain and sustain their ties with families.

Visits help rekindle the bonds among family members, and also impart social remittances (ideas, behaviors, and identities that have been modified in the host country and remitted) to the origin communities that encourage others to migrate. Generous leave entitlements of up to five weeks per year have allowed this to happen, which can be extended to seven or eight weeks by smart scheduling of seven straight night duties. In some cases nurses can visit the Philippines twice a year, but this is subject to the approval of the employer. These visits are often timed to coincide with important events or milestones in the family or community such as graduations, anniversaries, birthdays, and fiestas.

Baggage preparations for visits to the Philippines show an interesting way of how social capital is accumulated. Although a baggage is already severely restricted in weight (20 kilos) by the airline, Filipinos still leave about five kilos for the *padala* of friends (i.e., gifts of friends to their friend's own relatives). They did this because of the norm of reciprocity present in their friendship network. The return migrant expects that their friends would also accept their *padala* when it is their friends' turn to go home.

These transnational practices to maintain ties with relatives in the Philippines are not only encouraged and sustained by migrant networks. Philippine private (real estate companies) and state institutions (Pag-Ibig Overseas Workers Program and Social Security System) encouraged the maintenance, continuation, and extension of these ties. These institutions have encouraged remittance sending by enticing migrant workers to invest in properties and in securing the health and general well-being of their relatives in the Philippines. The ease with which naturalized Irish Filipinos and Irish-born children of Filipinos can re-acquire Filipino citizenship by simply completing a form and taking an oath, have further encouraged the maintenance of ties with the homeland. These private and state institutional projects, in addition to the

ongoing *balikbayan* program and *Bagong bayani* label attributed to OFWs, foster what Basch, et al. (1994) called, ".. the construction of an ideology that envisions migrants as loyal citizens of their ancestral nation-state."

Prospects for the future

Due to the global financial crisis, Ireland instituted some budget cutbacks and immigration policy reversals, which have had an effect in shaping this emerging Philippines-Ireland migration system. In August 2010, a study commissioned by the Health Services Executive (HSE) recommended the closure of an entire hospital, redundancies and non-renewal of 1,000 contractual staff, and the closure of hundreds of beds, among others to plug the €63 Million that HSE overspent. Thus, demand for overseas nurses is expected to be dismal in the coming years, especially for Filipinos, with Ireland having Indians as a ready substitute. [36]

In September 2009, the Irish state reversed its work entitlement policy for non-EEA/EU spouses back to its pre-March 2004 level. Spouses of recently hired non-EEA/EU workers (i.e., those hired in or after September 2009) will only be granted a Stamp 3 (Dependant's stamp) and will not be eligible to work unless they secure their own work permit. This would have the effect of delaying family reunification for some recent hires (those hired since September 2009), and will return to a state-enforced dependency on the part of spouses for others.

[36] Anne-Marie Walsh and Anita Guidera . "Hospital faces axe from crippled HSE." Saturday August 07 2010 http://www.independent.ie/national-news/hospital-faces-axe-from-crippled-hse-2288278.html.

Recommendations

On POEA Policy

This study has put a spotlight on a policy gap that should be addressed by the Philippine government – what to do with generally well-meaning employers willing to hire Filipinos on the condition that they pay their own way, and the Filipino workers who are willing to bear the (presently illegal) costs of landing the job. There is a clear "unmet need" on the part of both the employers and their potential employees. With high unemployment rates in the country, the Philippine government should no longer insist on compliance with the standard contract especially from employers in countries where there are adequate labor standard and worker protections, such as Ireland. Although the minimum contract provisions were mandated to get the best terms possible for migrant workers, these provisions have cost numerous jobs because of the prohibitive cost of bringing a worker to Ireland. The POEA's Market Branch should come up with a policy that would be a win-win-win for all three parties (foreign employer, job candidate, and the Philippine state). Most current job offers appear genuine and can be verified and authenticated by the Philippine Consulate or Embassy in the host country.

Further, the POEA should be an advocate for the Filipino workers and look after their interests, rather than being an advocate for local recruitment agencies. There were many employers in Ireland willing to hire additional workers through direct hiring, but the POEA has interfered in a number of instances in which they were not partnering with a local agency. While many jobs for Ireland were lost because of this practice, numerous opportunities that were to be direct hired were identified by migrant networks in Ireland, for example, nurses who looked for jobs for their relatives and friends, usually in the same company where they worked. I propose a POEA certification for host country employers that are renewable every year at the

nearest Philippine Consulate or Embassy. The certificate should attest that the company exists and that it provides a safe work environment for and has no record of maltreatment of OFWs. The certification exempts the employers from working with Philippine recruitment agencies and allows them to direct hire as many workers as they need, provided all contracts are authenticated by the nearest Philippine Consulate or Embassy.

On Research Methodology

The investigation on the division of labor in migrant nurses' households led to a very important methodological approach when studying transnational families i.e., to probe the employment status of the husband, especially if the husband is unemployed. Researchers risk putting the unemployed husbands-left-behind in a negative light, that of a good-for-nothing husband, if their unemployed status is accepted at face value. Probing questions in this research led to the revelation that their unemployment status was a result of a joint-decision by the couple, and that they sacrificed their careers for full time care-work of their children. Although, qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews, do not aim to gather generalizable data, its local groundedness, flexibility, richness, and holism (Miles and Huberman, 1994) allow for deep understanding of people's experiences.

Areas for further Research

Although this study has focused on the transnational lives of professional nurses, there is still a dearth of information on the experiences of other types of highly skilled professional migrant workers. More studies of a similar nature should be conducted to understand the transnational practices of overseas professionals. For

example, the lives of Filipino teachers and other professionals working in the United States remain under-researched.

Another avenue potentially worth pursuing is comparing the transnational practices of Filipino domestic workers and nurses in Ireland. How do their practices differ, and to what extent are they the same? How do their family reunification experiences differ considering that one profession is more favored policy-wise (nurses) than the other?

In many of my interviews, I have encountered respondents with family members spread in *at least three* countries. It would be interesting to know how the transnational practices of the migrant members towards their base household in the Philippines are similar or how they differ. Who gives more remittances, for example, and why?

It is also necessary to investigate the constitutionality of the imposition of the OEC. It may be violating the right to travel of the Filipinos as enshrined in the Article 3 Section 6 of the Bill of Rights of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. The article stipulates that: "The liberty of abode and of changing the same within the limits prescribed by law shall not be impaired except upon lawful order of the court. Neither shall the right to travel be impaired except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health, as may be provided by law." There is a need to clarify/understand what the framers of the constitution meant by stopping travel "in the interest of public safety." They could have framed this in the context of preventing the spread of disease or preventing Filipino nationals from entering areas of armed conflict, but not to prevent them from leaving to earn a living in countries that are peaceful and have no health advisories.

While the Philippines-Ireland migration system it still in its early stages, its progress should be constantly monitored. Important changes in Filipino associations

and business establishments should be documented as they evolve and operate in Ireland. I am proposing the establishment of TransnationalFilipinoCommunities.org. Its focus would to document changes in the Filipino infrastructure in Ireland. Ireland can be the pilot country for this project, which will eventually be replicated to other countries where migrant Filipinos abound.

There is a dearth of information about the process of family reunification of migration workers. Searching for information on family reunification oftentimes would yield family reunification in the context of divorced or separated couples. Many migrant receiving countries, especially in Europe, have family reunification policies. Comparing these policies and the family reunification experiences of low-skilled and high-skilled workers in various countries would help us further understand the dynamics and factors influencing this process.

Lastly, there are two big, well-organized Filipino hometown associations in Ireland – a) the Kaliwat Iliganon Association, composed of Filipinos from Iligan City; and b) the Pangasinense Association Ireland, composed of Filipinos from the Province of Pangasinan. It could be worth studying and comparing the work and living conditions of the members of these associations in Ireland, their transnational practices, the current and past living conditions of their households in the Philippines, and the impact of their migration on their origin community.

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